Michel Bégon and the Direction of Economic Policy in French Canada from 1712 to 1726

by

Kathryn A. Young

A Thesis

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MASTER OF ARTS

For My Grandmother

Abstract

Michel Bégon, intendant of New France from 1712 to 1726, was responsible for the overall direction of finance, justice, and police. This study, however, will explore Bégon's jurisdiction within the context of finance and the economy. During this period Canadian economic policy was determined by principles central to Colbert's mercantilist theory. Accordingly, the colony was to be the supplier of natural resources such as fur, fish, and timber. Colonial self-sufficiency was to be permitted only for the production of the essential needs of life, and the colony was to be dependent on the Royal Treasury. By royal edict the colonial administrator was to put the policy into practice. But he often had to work on his own initiative, as it was impossible to maintain regular communication with his superiors in France because of distance and uncertain sea travel. Consequently, a man like Bégon had considerable opportunity to influence policy made by the Ancien Régime.

Therefore, the central question is how Michel Bégon implemented royal economic policy and how his work contributed to economic growth. Moreover, a study of New France exposes intricate relationships between families within the royal and colonial administrations. A subordinate question, thereby, is how Bégon's management of the colony was influenced by patronage and clientage.

The investigation focuses on Bégon's control of finance with specific reference to the allocation of royal funds, preparation of the annual budget, and resolution of the card money affair. His role in the fur trade is discussed with attention to his ideas on free trade, on establishment of posts in the west, and on the importance of the Indian and English to French commerce. An examination is made of Bégon's determination to promote a colonial export trade in agriculture, fishing, and forestry. Further, there is analysis of his proposal to import a black labour force from the Antilles.

Ultimately, French Canada was on a firmer economic footing in 1726 than in 1712. Hence, this study contends that growth and development of the colony throughout this period was due in some measure to Michel Bégon's direction of economic policy.

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INTRODUCTION

> Commission d'Intendant de la Justice, Police et Finances en Canada, Acadie, Isle de Terreneuve et autres Pays de la France Septentrionale, par le Sieur Bégon, du 31ème Mars 1710.
>
> . . . nous avons cru que nous ne pouvions faire un meilleur choix que vous, pour bien exercer cette charge pour le bien de notre service, et celui de nos sujets étant au dit pays . . .
>
> Versailles-signé 31 Mars 1710 par Louis Phélypeaux Pontchartrain Québec-enrégistré 14 Octobre 1712 par le Sieur de Monseignat[1]

Sails billowing, the king's ship "Le Héros" came into sight of the Quebec sentries posted at their bastions high on the cliffs of Cape Diamond. Word passed quickly that at last the ship had arrived. On board, this sixth day of October 1712, was Michel Bégon, long-awaited royal intendant, his wife Elisabeth de Beauharnois, and Bégon's younger brother Claude-Michel. After forty days of a "most calm and agreeable crossing" from Rochefort to Quebec, "Le Héros" dropped her sails and slid into port alongside commercial vessels of all sizes--barques, flûtes and canoes.

The Bégon family disembarked and were carried by small boat to the rocky shore of the St. Lawrence. There they were met by Philippe de Rigaud, Marquis de Vaudreuil, governor of the colony. After an exchange of greeting and messages, Vaudreuil took his party through the narrow, muddy streets of the Lower Town, caught in the shadow of the looming cliff. Backed up against the cliff, which rose more than 350 feet above the shore, were small houses, shops, and warehouses belonging to those engaged in the commercial life of the colony. The seventeenth-century

architectural style of these wood-frame and stone houses, with their steep slate or straw roofs, would have been reminiscent of those in towns along the French west coast, such as St. Malo, La Rochelle, and Rochefort.

The ultimate destination of the travellers was the Intendant's Palace located in the far reaches of the town, at the corner of rue Vallières and rue St. Nicolas, overlooking the St. Charles river. The palace was both the official residence of the intendant and the palais de justice. From the palace, they would have seen far above them the buildings of the Upper Town which could be reached by the rocky, winding rue de la Montagne. Testament to the religious and military influence in the colony, rising high from the cliff, were the principal edifices of Church and Crown. The governor's residence, the Château St. Louis, protected by a row of cannon, stood overlooking the St. Lawrence. In the same quartier were the baroque basilica, begun in 1650, and the cream-coloured stone buildings of the Jesuit seminary and college. Nearby were the Ursuline convent and the church of the Récollets. Symbolically, perhaps, the military and religious institutions found their place in the Upper Town, whereas trade and commerce offered the focus of life in the Lower Town.

The centre of activity in the Lower Town was the marketplace, on the cobbled square, in front of the parish church of Notre-Dame des Victoires. Here in the market and throughout the tiny streets close by the St. Lawrence walked merchants and traders from France and the colony, shopkeepers and artisans. Coming from the harbour were ships' captains and navvies, voyageurs and Indians. This was the world into which Michel Bégon entered when he took up residence in the Intendant's Palace in October 1712.

Appointed by Louis XIV as intendant of Canada, Michel Bégon was responsible for the management of justice, police, and finance. The purpose of this work, however, is to explore Bégon's jurisdiction within the context of finance and economic matters related to it.

During this period, Canadian economic policy was designed in France and was determined by three principles which were central to Colbert's mercantilist theory. First, the raison d'être of the colony was to supply natural resources such as fur, fish, and timber to satisfy the want of these commodities in the metropolis. Second, colonial self-sufficiency was to be permitted only for the production of the essential needs of life. And third, the colony was to be financially dependent on the Royal Treasury. The colonial administrator was to follow orders and to put the policy into practice. But, significantly, the intendant often had to act on his own initiative, as it was impossible to maintain regular communication with the royal government because of the vast distances and the uncertainty of sea travel. Consequently, from time to time, he had the opportunity to influence the economic policy of the Ancien Régime. Moreover, the inherent liability of colonial government, with its problems of communication and distance from the central power, could become an asset for the intendant with ambition and imagination, determined to influence imperial policy.

Therefore, the principal question here is how Michel Bégon directed the economic policy determined by the Ancien Régime, and how his ideas ultimately contributed to the economic development of French Canada. Furthermore, a study of colonial government brings to light the intricate relationships between family and professional contacts within the royal and colonial administrations. Thus, a subordinate question arises, that

of the influence of patronage and clientage on Bégon's management of the eighteenth-century colonial post.

At the time of Michel Bégon's appointment, French territory in North America reached from the Atlantic to Lake Superior and from Hudson's Bay to the Gulf of Mexico. In principle, his authority extended throughout this immense region. In practice, however, his work centred around the administrative towns of Quebec, Trois-Rivières, and Montreal, and the almost 19,000 inhabitants who lived for the most part along the shores of the St. Lawrence. The fur trade, under monopoly control of a French syndicate, was the key to the Canadian economy, although cod fishing off the Grand Banks of Newfoundland historically had provided the link between France and the colony. By the time of Bégon's arrival, over 52,000 arpents of land were under cultivation, primarily in wheat, peas, and flax.[2] Mining, forestry, and inland fishing were fledgling industries.

Michel Bégon arrived in Quebec just months before the signing of the Treaty of Utrecht on 1 March 1713. The treaty, which terminated the War of the Spanish Succession, restored a climate of relative peaceful co-existence between English and French in the North American colonies. But the prospect of peace was to be dampened for the French by the loss of valuable fur trading territory in Acadia, Hudson's Bay, and Newfoundland. Moreover, trading links with the Indian tribes along the Mississippi Valley were weakened, when equal trading rights were granted to the English. Finally, a consideration important to Canadian security was that the Iroquois were formally made citizens of Britain. The loss of these territories meant that the Canadian interior was encircled by English possessions, while the prospective change in Indian relations

called for a re-assessment of Franco-Indian trade and military alliances.

At the time of Bégon's arrival, Canada was in severe financial straits because the French economy was near bankruptcy by Louis XIV's wars, extravagant living, and poor fiscal management. The colony, dependent on an annual shipment of currency from the metropolis, had to resort to using everyday playing cards for money. The fur trade was stagnated by a glut of furs rotting in French warehouses, and commercial development had come to a near standstill because of the shortage of money and labour. Finally, personal relations between Governor Vaudreuil and Bégon's predecessors, Jacques and Antoine-Denis Raudot, had become intolerable. Therefore, at the outset, Michel Bégon's term as intendant must be seen as nothing less than a formidable challenge for any colonial administrator.

Michel Bégon's fourteen year service as intendant, from 1712 to 1726, was one of the longest in the history of French Canada.[3] Yet in spite of the duration of his tenure, little has been written about either the man or his career, although studies have been made of other intendants, notably Jean Talon, Claude-Thomas Dupuy, Gilles Hocquart, and François Bigot.[4] Moreover, and more broadly, historical research on New France has tended to focus on periods other than the early eighteenth-century. Thus, the thesis will attempt to make some contribution to this particular area of study.

The research which has been done on early eighteenth-century French Canada has provided the context within which the thesis will evolve. More specifically, however, this project has employed existing work on French and colonial provincial administrators and, especially, that most relevant to French and Canadian economic concerns of the period.

The most important general works for the subject are those of Roland Mousnier, Robert Mandrou, Guy Frégault and W. J. Eccles.[5] Also useful to the study were those works of Robert La Roque de Roquebrun and André Vachon on French and Canadian institutions.[6] In recent years more research has been done on the metropolitan and colonial administrators. Therefore, essential to this analysis were the writings of Yvonne Bézard, Vivian Gruder, Jean-Claude Dubé, Yves Zoltvany, and Maurice Filion.[7] Moreover, inquiries made by French and Canadian economic historians have been important to the economic investigation. Of consequence were those of Ernest Labrousse, Fernand Braudel, Alice J. Lunn, Jean Hamelin, Pierre Harvey, James Pritchard, John Bosher and Louise Dechêne.[8]

Official correspondence between the colonial administration and the Crown established the base of primary documentation. Most useful were the Colonial Archives C11A, C11B, F1A and F2A series and the Archives of the Marine $C^7$23 (personal dossiers), transcripts and microfilm of which can be found in the Public Archives of Canada. The original manuscripts are held in the Archives Nationales, Paris, France. In addition personal correspondence from the Bégon family collection housed at the University of Montreal was a particular asset to this study.

Finally, published documents which proved to be invaluable to the research were the Documents Relatifs à la Nouvelle France (1884), Edits, Ordonnances Royaux Déclarations et Arrêts du Conseil d'Etat du Roi Concernant le Canada (1854), Arrêts et Réglements du Conseil Supérieur de Québec et Ordonnances et Jugements des Intendants du Canada (1885), Complément des Ordonnances et Jugements des Gouverneurs et Intendants du Canada (1856), and Adam Shortt, Documents Relating to Canadian Currency Exchange and Finance During the French Period (1925).[9]

The thesis which emerges from this project does so over five chapters in which attention is paid to Michel Bégon's management of the Canadian economy. His work centred on the regulation of finance and the promotion of commercial development. However, before one can understand the implications of this activity, one must place Bégon within his role as colonial administrator. This is the object of the first chapter. The discussion will establish Bégon within the context of French families of the nobility who played a leading role in the administration of Canada. A survey of family ties to the Ministry of Marine, that government department responsible for administration of the colonies, provides an interesting insight into lines of patronage and power extending across the Atlantic. Additionally, a sketch will be made of the imperial and colonial bureaucracies pointing out the relationship between the two administrations in determining the responsibilities of the intendant.

The second and third chapters will deal with Bégon's supervision of finance. An investigation of the intendant's management and dispersement of colonial funds, with stress laid on his personal priorities, will offer the focus for the first half of the second chapter. The balance of the chapter will be directed to a review of Bégon's 1717 budget. Inquiry into the budget will not only illustrate the annual allocation of funds, but should also give a glimpse of daily life in the colony for the social historian. Chapter three will investigate the central financial question during Bégon's tenure - the stabilization of colonial currency and, more specifically, the resolution of the card money affair. Evident here are the frustrations of the colonial administrator who worked thousands of miles away from the controlling bureaucracy.

Chapters four and five are aimed at Bégon's ideas and action re-

lating to commercial development. The intendant's work in the fur trade, his opinions on renewal and extension of the western posts, and his ideas of freeing the trade in the west from monopoly control, form the basis of discussion. Furthermore, his arguments for a more efficient trading policy with the Indian, viable markets, competitive pricing and a greater sensitivity to supply and demand make up the body of the chapter. Finally, the inquiry will turn to Bégon's interest in economic development in agriculture, fishing, and forestry. Further, attention will be given to an examination of his labour policy. Under scrutiny will be his ideas of supplementing the colonial labour supply with negro workers from the West Indies.

In the course of this analysis, three themes emerge which frame the foundation of French imperial policy in North America--commercial development, retention of political influence, and maintenance of sound Indian relations. Bégon's work and thinking endorsed these eighteenth-century imperial objectives. However, he also appealed for more colonial independence in financial and economic decision-making. He called for freedom of the fur trade in the west. He supported and actively worked for a diversification of colonial industry and an expansion of the colonial export trade in wheat, hemp, and forestry products. In these fields of economic endeavour, he was often a leading voice.

As a result, French Canada in 1726 was on a firmer economic footing than it had been in 1712. No doubt the period of peace between England and France was of importance to economic recovery. Moreover, the royal administration under the guidance of the Regent and the Council of Marine offered impetus to commercial development. So, too, stabilization of finance and a revitalization of the fur trade were important

factors in creating a more settled economy.

However, it is believed that the drive and enthusiasm of Michel Bégon were a key influence in the economic regeneration of French Canada. Further, it is argued that Bégon was a leading force in all areas of the colony's economic activity, from the regulation of finance to the development of economic endeavour. And, finally, it is proposed that the work of Michel Bégon established a base for further economic expansion and growth in subsequent decades.

Chapter One

MICHEL BÉGON - FONCTIONNAIRE MARITIME ET COLONIAL

"La carrière de Michel Bégon mériterait d'être étudiée."

Guy Frégault, 1944[1]

Letters dispatched from Quebec, in November 1712, announced the successful journey and arrival of the Bégon family. The intendant, writing to Jérôme Pontchartrain, Minister of Marine, reported that he and his wife Elisabeth had made a safe and enjoyable passage from Rochefort to Canada:

> I have the honour of writing to you . . . in order to inform you of the arrival of the king's ship "Le Héros," which has docked in front of this town . . . after forty days of navigation without having met another vessel. M. de Beaumont [the ship's captain], by his careful navigation has made for Mme. Bégon and me a most calm and agreeable crossing.[2]
>
> Michel Bégon to Jérôme Pontchartrain, 12 November 1712.

Bégon's account of his journey was complemented by a letter from Governor Philippe de Rigaud, Marquis de Vaudreuil who described the arrival and reception of the recently appointed intendant:

> M. and Mme. Bégon have disembarked in perfect health, and I dare assure you in advance of the good relations that there will always be between M. Bégon and myself, all the people have expressed a great joy in seeing him, Monseigneur, and I for one more than any other.[3]
>
> Philippe de Vaudreuil to Jérôme Pontchartrain, 15 October 1712.

Vaudreuil and the colonials responded to the landing of the intendant

with the same sense of optimism that pervaded the colony that autumn. It was a sense that the new official would bring to the colonial administration a restoration of financial stability and a renewal of commercial activity.

Bégon's successful pursuit of these goals, however, was to be influenced by his personal background. His family ties to the French nobility and governing members of the Ministry of Marine were significant factors in his direction of the colonial post. Moreover, an analysis of the liaison between the Marine and the colony illustrates the power of particular families in the colonial service. By pointing out the lines of patronage linking Michel Bégon to the upper echelons of the royal government, one can trace the career of a typical functionary in the Ancien Régime. The formation of the colonial official was as important to his career as family connections. Legal knowledge and practical administrative training in the port towns of western France were the foundation stones of many who sought positions across the Atlantic.[4]

The family bonds between the royal government and the colonial service were supported by a tightly organized bureaucratic structure, with the Ministry of Marine acting as the directing body. An investigation of the relationship between the Imperial and colonial administrations will provide an insight into the general context within which the intendant had to work. Then, in more specific terms, an outline will follow of Bégon's responsibilities while on Canadian soil. With this background in place, a study of Michel Bégon's role in the direction of economic policy will develop in subsequent chapters.

Unfortunately, the documentary evidence concerning the physical appearance and personality of Michel Bégon is sparse. However, reports

and correspondence do lend us a picture, if somewhat sketchy, of the Canadian intendant. By reading between the lines, we can surmise that he possessed certain characteristics. For instance, it would appear that he was not easily provoked. Further, he was hard-working, and committed to his task. But he was also pragmatic and opportunistic when the time seemed right. Adam Shortt contends that Bégon's "untiring activity," the "fertility of his suggestions," and the "thorough acquaintance which he displayed with every detail of economic life in the colony," contributed to the advance of economic growth during his extended period as intendant.[5]

His even temperament and commitment to duty were likely responsible for the fact that his intendancy of fourteen years was more stable and of longer duration than either that of his predecessors, Jacques and Antoine-Denis Raudot (father and son) (1705 to 1711) or his successor, Claude-Thomas Dupuy (1726 to 1728). The Raudot term was marked by increasingly bitter relations between the elder Raudot and Governor Vaudreuil. Their mutual distrust and animosity coloured the administration of the colony, especially in the later years.[6] Thus, when Michel Bégon took office in the autumn of 1712, "the atmosphere of the official milieu, still rather sombre seemed to be lightened . . . "[7] The colonial official brought with him to Quebec some of the social trappings and conventions of the Intendant's Palace at Rochefort. During his father's incumbency there, diplomats and members of the royal court had been frequent visitors. Bégon, consequently, loved receptions and formal dinners. Furthermore, he firmly believed in outwardly maintaining a social standing in keeping with his class. Like his father, an avid collector and naturalist, Bégon displayed a wide range of interests which

included the dispatch of wild animals to the king's menagerie in Paris.[8]

A further understanding of the intendant can be gained from the personal comments of his contemporaries. Attestations to Bégon's character are rare; however, we know that he had gained the respect and confidence of the Bishop of Quebec, Mgr. de St. Vallier. Bégon, the bishop claimed, was a "perfectly honest man and a dignified intendant . . . a man worthy of compliments."[9] Moreover, it would seem that Mme. Bégon also held the admiration of some members of the community. Michel Sarrazin, the royal surgeon in the colony, said the Bégons "are one and the other of a character so generous and so well meaning that without any other reason than to please, they do good."[10] In contrast to these reports, there were accusations, although never proven, that Bégon in his enthusiasm for commerce speculated in wheat and food stores at the expense of colonial welfare.[11] On balance, though, Bégon's association with other colonial officials and the inhabitants seems to have been positive. One has the sense that in the course of his long posting, he had earned their respect and loyalty.

Close to the intendant was an équipe of officials. With few exceptions these men held their posts and worked in concert with Bégon throughout his tenure. Key members of the Bégon administration were Nicolas Boucault, Bégon's secretary, and Charles de Monseignat, Manager of the Company of the Farm. Equally central to the intendant's work were François Clairambault d'Aigremont, Controller of the Marine, Nicolas Lanouiller de Boisclerc, agent of Aubert, Néret and Gayot, the fur trading syndicate, and Gaspard-Joseph de Chaussegros de Léry, chief architect and engineer.[12]

The relationship between Michel Bégon and Governor Philippe de

Vaudreuil was, for the most part, also congenial and satisfactory. Despite some troublesome periods of mutual suspicion and differences of opinion, they worked efficiently and well together. The result was that "their joint administration was very beneficial to the growth and prosperity of the colony. . . ."[13]

However, Bégon's séjour in Canada was marred by personal misfortune. He and his family narrowly escaped two fires in the Intendant's Palace. The first, in January 1713, took the lives of three domestics and that of one of Bégon's secretaries. Private papers and personal possessions were also destroyed. The second fire, during the winter of 1725, constituted another financial loss for the family. The fires, in turn, were followed by a shipwreck in which merchandise destined for Bégon was never recovered. These natural disasters, combined with the tenuous financial situation in the colony during Bégon's tenure, dashed any hopes he might have had for making money while in Canada.[14]

Further, adjustment to the rigours of Canadian life was demanded of all colonial officials, especially those of Bégon's social class and family background. Vaudreuil wrote to Jérôme Pontchartrain, Minister of Marine, in 1713, that "M. Bégon has not yet settled down here, time will show him and make him understand that there is a great difference between Rochefort and Quebec."[15] Bégon's difficulty in adapting to the social and business life of the colony was not surprising, for Michel Bégon by birth and marriage was related to some of the great noble families of the robe in eighteenth-century France.

The Bégon family found its roots in the sixteenth century. The early Bégon held positions as financial officials of the Crown. In the seventeenth century, the family was united to the Minister of Marine, Jean-Baptiste Colbert, through his marriage to Marie Charron, the daughter

of Marie Bégon and Jacques Charron. Subsequently, close relations developed between Colbert and his first cousin Magistrate Bégon, the father of the intendant of Canada, and Bégon's sister Marie-Madeleine. These links were reflected in the Minister of Marine's direction of the colonial service. For example, in 1682 Jacques de Meulles, husband of Marie-Madeleine Bégon, was appointed intendant of Canada. He remained in Quebec until 1686. In the same period, Magistrate Bégon was nominated intendant of the Antilles. He later served Louis XIV as intendant of the galleys at Marseilles, intendant of the marine at Rochefort, and intendant of the generality of La Rochelle. His marriage to Madeleine Druillon, the daughter of the master of the "Chambre de Comptes" of Blois, produced eight children, the eldest of whom was Michel Bégon de la Picardière, born in Blois on 21 March 1667. The three sons of this union had distinguished careers. Michel followed his father's footsteps as a royal official, becoming intendant of Canada and later intendant of the marine at Le Havre. Scipion-Jérôme, his brother, was elected Bishop of Toul in 1721, and Claude-Michel, born during his parents séjour in the Antilles, was a "lieutenant de vaisseau" of the king, lieutenant of the king at Montreal and Trois-Rivières and, as of 1743, governor of Trois-Rivières. Furthermore, Catherine, sister of the Canadian intendant, married Roland Barrin, Marquis de la Galissonnière. They had a son, Roland-Michel Barrin de la Galissonnière, who served as acting governor of Canada from 1747 to 1749.[16]

On 9 January 1711, Michel Bégon married Elisabeth de Beauharnois, the daughter of François de Beauharnois, Sieur de la Boische, and Margarite Françoise Pyvart de Chastulé. The Beauharnois family traced its nobility and service to the Crown of France from the late fourteenth

century. François de Beauharnois, Elisabeth's father, was a member of the Parlement of Orléans and director general of finances and the royal salt tax. Her brothers François, Charles, and Claude had careers which were important to the history of French Canada. By his marriage, Bégon became brother-in-law to François de Beauharnois (intendant of New France from 1702 to 1705 and intendant of Rochefort from 1710 to 1739), to Charles de Beauharnois (governor of Canada from 1726 to 1747), and to Claude de Beauharnois de Beaumont (king's naval captain). Finally, as a result of the marital connections between the Beauharnois and the Phélypeaux of Blois, Bégon, after his marriage, became a relative of three ministers of marine, Louis Phélypeaux Pontchartrain, in office from 1690 to 1699, his son Jérôme Phélypeaux Pontchartrain, minister from 1699 to 1715, and Jean-Frédéric Phélypeaux, Comte de Maurepas, in the king's service from 1723 to 1749.[17]

Four children were born to Michel Bégon and Elisabeth de Beauharnois. Jeanne-Elisabeth, Michel, Marie-Madeleine, and Catherine all arrived during their father's tenure at Quebec. Jeanne-Elisabeth and Catherine married, their sister Marie-Madeleine entered the Ursuline convent in Blois. Michel followed his father and grandfather into the service of the marine. He became intendant at Dunkerque from 1756 to 1761.[18]

The Bégon-Beauharnois marriage well illustrates familial ties between the imperial and colonial administrations during the eighteenth century. It is a good example of the potential power of families in shaping the colonial empire during the Ancien Régime. An awareness, therefore, of these relationships provides an important insight into the actions of a Crown official like Michel Bégon.

Bégon's formation is a classic case of preparation for the administrative cadre of the Ancien Régime.[19] From birth to the age of fifteen, he lived with his parents at Blois, then at Toulon, Brest, and Le Havre the great military ports of the late seventeenth century, when his father was climbing the administrative ladder of the marine. Michel sr. prepared the way to becoming intendant in the Antilles by moving up from the position of sub-delegate of intendants, to commissaire at Brest and Le Havre, then to intendant. On 12 September 1682 Bégon, his wife and some of their eight children, departed France for Martinique. Young Michel, aged fifteen, was left in the care of his grandparents so that he could continue his schooling.[20] The family returned in 1685 and in 1686 Bégon sr. was posted to Marseilles, as intendant of the galleys. There he obtained a position for his son Michel, as principal writer, in the office of the marine at nearby Toulon. Two years later, when Bégon the elder was appointed intendant at Rochefort, Michel followed and took another post as principal writer.

In 1690, Michel jr. became Commissaire de la Marine and in that capacity was engaged in naval combat against the English at Bévezières and Beachy Head. As Commissaire he divided his time between Rochefort and the Royal Court. Throughout this period he studied law, and in 1694 he completed his "licence" at Orléans, following his father's advice that a career in law was a good foundation for administrative work.

Bégon sr., satisfied that his son had qualified in the legal profession, then bought him the office of Conseiller au Parlement de Metz. Young Bégon remained in the post until 1704. That year, again with his father's financial help, he became Inspector General Superintendant of Supplies in the western port towns of Rochefort and La Rochelle (only a

few miles apart) overseeing shipments of goods and munitions to the colonies of the French empire.[21]

Eighteenth-century Rochefort was an important military and ship-building port; La Rochelle was its commercial counterpart from where the merchant ships sailed every year to the Antilles and Canada. For Bégon, a walk along the quay at La Rochelle would have been a constant reminder of the far flung corners of the world under French rule. There he would have met with the sights and smells of the Antilles, Canada, Africa, and South America:

> Barrels emitting the scent of cocoa or vanilla or the more acrid odour of tobacco, sugar cane, indigo. . . .
> A salty and resinous smell announced a delivery from Canada, the products of the sea, the hunt, the forest; cod, stockfish, salmon, salted eels, fish oil and beside these beaver pelts and masts, and for the curious who wished to acquire a fantastic object, the shells and clothes of the Indians. From Africa came the precious denrées, ivory, gum, gold dust; from Portugal muscade; from Brazil chocolate and oranges.[22]

Alongside these cargoes waiting to be dispersed into the French market were goods ready for conveyance on sailing ships bound for the Atlantic.

From Rochefort and La Rochelle convoys of the king's fleet crossed to the Antilles and Canada carrying currency, troops, uniforms, arms, and flour. In their holds were also presents for the Indians, including arms, woollen fabrics, brandy, feathers and "toute la bimbeloterie qui peut séduire des grands enfants." Swords of yellow copper, vermillion, medals of gold and silver, mirrors of white iron and bells added yet further appeal to these shipments.[23]

Without doubt, Bégon's work as Inspector-General Superintendant of Supplies offered him invaluable experience for his future post of intendant and director of the Canadian economy. He was a trained lawyer,

knowledgeable in the affairs of the ports and especially familiar with the dispatch and return of goods and supplies to the North American colonies. He had under his direction munitions, provisions, and the king's stores. Moreover, he procured and shipped specie to the colony and sent out recruits for the military in Canada, Île Royale (Cape Breton Island), and Newfoundland. By the time of his posting to Canada, he was in touch with port officials, the merchants of Rochefort and La Rochelle and, what is more, was cognizant of the economic conditions of the colony.

During Bégon's period in the Charente-Maritime, much of his time was directed to family affairs. When in either Rochefort or La Rochelle, he lived in the intendant's palaces with other members of his family. Yvonne Bézard suggests that the Bégon household was typical of that of a functionary of the first rank. Luxurious receptions were held for every distinguished guest, but domestic life was severe and spartan - "demeure opulente, vie austère." Bégon's father, she says, would not tolerate mischief-making, quarrelling, blasphemy, gaming or drinking. All the family and domestics gathered around him every evening for prayer.[24] From 1698, Bégon the elder suffered from numerous physical ailments which made it difficult for him to carry on with his job, therefore, Michel and other family members were called in to take over.[25] From 1705, Roland de la Galissonnière, brother-in-law to Bégon jr., acted as commander of the port of Rochefort, so as to be close to his ailing relative. After many years of illness, Michel Bégon, intendant of Rochefort, died on 14 March 1710.

On the thirty-first of the same month his son, Michel Bégon, was nominated for the post of intendant of New France. He accepted the position but did not embark for the colony until the autumn of 1712,

because of the need to settle family affairs. From 1686 to 1710, Michel Bégon had prepared himself carefully and diligently for a superior administrative post in the marine. Administrative work in the service of the king was bound to bring prestige to a family like the Bégons and hopefully would bring with it its monetary reward.

Bégon departed France in 1712 and did not return until November 1726, to fill the post of intendant at Le Havre. The patronage of his relative, the Comte de Maurepas, Minister of Marine, likely explains Bégon's good fortune in obtaining the post on the west coast.[26] Michel Bégon held the office for nine years, then, in 1736 was nominated intendant of the Admiralty of Normandy. He took up residence at Rouen where he was nominated intendant of the naval armies in 1746. Bégon held the post for only one year. He died on 18 January 1747.[27]

Michel Bégon's role in New France must be seen not only in relation to colonial affairs, but within the broader context of the administrative structure of the Ancien Régime. What will become evident in this inquiry are the lines of patronage between Versailles and the colony and the ease with which certain families became involved in the direction of Canadian affairs. An analysis of the colonial intendancy, therefore, must begin with an investigation into the working of the royal administration.

During the reign of Louis XIV, the French government was organized around the central power of the king and a number of key ministries. Colonial affairs were directed by the Ministry of Marine. From 1663 to 1683, the Marine was dominated by Jean-Baptiste Colbert, first minister to Louis XIV and second cousin to Michel Bégon. During his tenure, Colbert reorganized the colonial system. Pivotal to the minister's vision of a revitalized France was a policy of mercantilism which, through

an expanded colonial empire, would allow France to match her economic rivals the English and the Dutch. From the colonies would be drawn valuable natural resources. Canada, for example, would provide fur, fish, and timber. In addition, the colonies would act as markets for France's surplus manufactured goods. The principles of the colonial pact, H. Blet suggests, were that -

> all colonial produce would be exported to the metropolis, and the colonies would only be able to buy from the mother country. The mother country would not manufacture colonial goods but would only buy such goods from the colonies. The metropolitan navy would have the privilege of transporting colonial materials.[28]

Colbert's mercantilist policy was carried on by his eighteenth-century successors. When he died in 1683, his post was filled by his son, the Marquis de Seignelay. Seignelay was in office until 1690, when he was succeeded by Louis Phélypeaux de Pontchartrain. From 1663 to 1748 the Ministry of Marine was ruled by the families Colbert and Phélypeaux Pontchartrain.[29] Michel Bégon was related to both.

Louis Phélypeaux de Pontchartrain was followed by his son Jérôme who was a key minister during Bégon's intendancy in Canada. Pontchartrain was in office from 1699 to 1715 when he was forced out under allegations of overextending his use of patronage. The minister has been described as an extremely ugly man with a protruding tongue. And, he had only one eye, after having lost the other in a severe case of smallpox. Moreover, it has been said that he had difficulty making decisions, and that he brought little that was new or imaginative to the office, in spite of a capacity for hard work and a certain shrewdness.[30]

The demise of Louis XIV ushered in a period of institutional instability and reorganization in the royal administration. Power fell

into the hands of a regent, Philippe, the Duc d'Orléans, nephew of the Sun King. The need for a regent was obvious, as the only legal heir was a child of five years. D'Orléans, though a man of culture and ability, also had a widespread reputation for drunkenness and dissipation.[31] However, his infamous image did not hinder his organizational abilities and his determination to stabilize French government and finance.

Under the Regent, the royal ministries were suppressed and replaced by a Polysynodie - six councils for war, marine, finance, home affairs, foreign affairs, and religion, respectively. Each council was composed of ten members. The councils remained in place until 1723 when they were formally cancelled by the Regent who returned to the former system of government through the ministries and the secretaries of state.[32] Of interest here is the Council of Marine, that body charged with colonial responsibilities and which was in power during the years of Bégon's tenure in New France. The Council met at the Louvre under the direction of the Duc d'Estrées, Président, and the Comte de Toulouse, the Chef du Conseil. Secretary for the Council was La Chapelle who had trained under Pontchartrain.[33]

Toulouse, a man who would be central to Bégon's administration of Canada, soon assumed almost full control of the Council as d'Estrées was often called away on extended voyages. Marcel Giraud says that Toulouse was not a brilliant personality, but his qualities were those of a hard-working man devoted to his task - "regular and exact." His administrative career had been distinguished by a methodical spirit and care for orderly business. He was committed to a reorganization of all arrêts, rules and ordinances concerning the Marine, colonies, and commerce. In

more specific terms, he established a programme for the reform of colonial management. During his tenure, he was successful in bringing the rate of exchange in New France to a par with France. To avoid "malversation" and injustice, he tried to repress the practice of private commerce in the royal marine. And as part of the programme, he submitted colonial administrations to a most efficient surveillance, partly by soliciting the appraisals of junior functionaries, and partly by demanding the naval commanders to comment on colonial justice. Finally, the Council of Marine under his tutelage was determined to foster economic growth and expansion of the colonies. This was evident in the many directives coming from the Louvre which urged Vaudreuil and Bégon to generate agricultural production, stimulate the fur trade, and regulate currency exchange.[34]

Second in rank to the Minister of Marine, and later to the Council, was the corps of premiers commis. This body was of significant practical importance to colonial affairs and to administrators like Bégon. As a group of functionaries, the commis were first recruited from the nobility and the upper bourgeoisie by the Marquis de Seignelay. By 1715, they had become a powerful entity in the royal administration. The commis were instrumental in the direction of foreign affairs, war, and the marine. Moreover, they were particularly influential in the shaping of colonial policies in their capacity as decision-makers in the office of the Marine. For instance, when the correspondence came into France each year from the colonial governors, intendants, and other royal officials, résumés of their annual reports, budgets, and requests for royal guidance were made by the premiers commis. Often their remarks were confined to a peremptory note or a decision written in three or four lines on the margin of an official letter. Furthermore, one almost could be assured

that the reply to the colonial official would be prepared by the commis. These letters often never passed under the eyes of the minister or president, much less the king, unless they were extremely important.[35] When seeking an interpretation of the official correspondence, between Paris and Bégon, one must remember these functionaries in the office of the Marine.

The administration of the marine was closely allied to that of the colonial empire and, therefore, one must regard events in one through the eyes of the other. To facilitate economic expansion, according to Colbert's mercantilist philosophy, the administrative framework of the colonies was laid out along the lines of the French provincial governments. In Canada, the royal administration was vested in the hands of the governor-general, bishop, intendant, and Conseil Supérieur.[36] Theoretically, the jurisdiction of these bodies extended to all the French possessions in North America including Canada, Acadia, Newfoundland, and Louisbourg. The territories of Louisiana and New Orleans had their own governments corresponding directly with the Crown. Within Canada, there were three administrative seats, one each at Quebec, Trois-Rivières, and Montreal. Although each of the administrative bodies had an important role to play in the governing of New France, the discussion here will centre on that of the governor and intendant.

The governor-general was the highest dignitary in the colony, as the king's representative. Military affairs and diplomatic relations were his exclusive domain. He was commander-in-chief of all armies on Canadian soil. And he presided over the council of war. He was responsible for fortifications, and alone could decide whether there should be peace or war with the Indians or the English colonies. He

appointed the commanders of the ports and forts, and, accordingly used them as agents of Indian policy. Limitations on his power came only from Versailles. He received help in the management of his affairs from his delegates, the governors of Montreal and Trois-Rivières. In conjunction with his exclusive duties, the governor also shared some responsibilities with the intendant. Under their joint direction were matters pertaining to population, colonization, trade, industry, maintenance of order, supervision of the clergy, religious communities, and hospitals. In addition, men like Vaudreuil and Bégon granted seigneuries and offered judgement in legal disputes arising out of seigneurial questions. Finally, the governor took part in confirmation of the annual budget prepared by the intendant.[37]

The intendant was the most important administrator in the colony, although he ranked lower than the bishop in the hierarchical order. "In all sections of economic and social life, the intendant was the initator, promotor and indispensable king-pin."[38] He was appointed by the king and was removable at his pleasure. As the case of Michel Bégon illustrates, appointments to the office generally came from the noblesse de robe, men with a legal background who had purchased offices in the royal administration. The intendant was directly responsible to the Minister or the Council of Marine, but for all intents and purposes was often at the beck and call of the premiers commis. Thus, in practical terms premiers commis like Forcade, Arnauld de la Porte, or Fontanieu could be more important to Bégon than either Toulouse or Pontchartrain.[39]

Finance, justice, and civil administration were under the intendant's sole jurisdiction. For the most part, he had "umbrella" control over financial matters. Only the governor could oppose his

decisions and only then for the most serious reason. Public funds were at the intendant's disposal, and he alone was responsible for allocation of contracts and other privileges. The intendant governed the circulation of currency and other modes of exchange. He was also manager of all the Crown's possessions and jurisdiction over those in distant posts. Orders for public works, affirmed by Royal consent, were given by the intendant. However, decisions concerning fortifications were made jointly between Vaudreuil and Bégon.[40]

In matters of justice, Bégon supervised all judicial tribunals, judges, and law officers. He attended to the execution of edicts, ordinances, and regulations. Because of his unique position, he could call before himself any civil or criminal case pending before the courts. He could even revoke sentences passed by the Conseil Supérieur, if he believed that they contravened an interest in justice. Although the intendant did not have the right to make appointments, he could in exceptional cases remove judges or law officers from their posts. He was believed to be the only competent judge in crimes against the internal well-being of the state. For example, actions relating to public order, levying of dues, smuggling, the fur trade, and the seigneurial regime fell under his rubric. The intendant acted as the president of the Conseil Supérieur, the governor being only the "honorary" president; therefore, appeal against the intendant as judge could only be heard by the King's Council in France. In sum, with cases which the intendant had the right to hear, his judgements were without appeal.

Public order and police also fell under the control of Michel Bégon. With the co-operation of Governor Vaudreuil, he was to promote the development of land holdings, to encourage an increase in population,

and to foster trade and industry. His mandate even extended to keeping the roads clear of snow and preventing the racing of cabrioles in front of churches, when the parishioners were departing from the Sunday morning service.[41]

To ease his work-load, an intendant like Michel Bégon could appoint occasional rather than permanent delegates; the exception was in Montreal where he was permanently represented by the commissary of the marine. Key functionaries under the intendant fell into three categories; officials of the marine, of roads, and of the Domaine d'Occident or (the Company of the Farm as it is sometimes called) which was the body responsible for the collection of taxes and dues charged in the colony.[42]

This foray into the labyrinth of French and colonial administrations will have emphasized the institutional ties between the metropolis and the colony. Moreover, in the relative simplicity of the colonial government one can perceive the wide-ranging powers and authority of the office of the intendant. Because of the intendant's responsibility for the king's funds, accounts, stores and contracts, it is easy to understand that there were ready opportunities for a man like Bégon to establish a clientèle and patronage. Furthermore, a colonial administrator such as Michel Bégon was subject to his own line of patronage through his family and marital connections--notwithstanding his formation in the port towns of France where, without doubt, he had business and trade dealings with merchants who were central to the developing colonial economy.

Thus, it must be within this context of the structural links between the imperial and colonial administrations, the familial and marital ties, and the formation as royal functionary, that one views the career

of Michel Bégon and makes an assessment of his direction of economic activity in French Canada.

Chapter Two

MONSIEUR l'INTENDANT DE FINANCE

. . . il n'y a icy d'autre maladie
contagieuse que la rareté de l'argent.

Michel Bégon to Scipion-Jérôme[1]
Québec, 29 September 1721.

The Canadian economy, at base, was dependent on funds from the Royal Treasury of France. Intrinsic to this system were problems chronic to colonial administration. The most critical of which was a persistent shortage of specie for trade and daily exchange. A significant cause of the shortage was the hazard of eighteenth-century sea travel, as the king's ships carrying the annual money supply were frequently lost to shipwreck, attacks by pirates, and foreign enemies. When this happened, the colony had to resort to her own means of exchange until the arrival of the next ship, which often was not before the following year. Furthermore, because of France's involvement in the War of the Spanish Succession, the Royal Treasury was repeatedly short of funds. Therefore, the annual shipments of money to the colonies were frequently withheld.[2]

In addition to the shortage of specie, there was a veritable gap in communication between the colony and the metropolis. Under ideal conditions orders and replies to requests would leave Versailles in May or June and would arrive in Quebec in mid-summer. The responses to these orders, and the annual reports of the colonial officials, would be sent out on the last sailing ships before the freeze-up of the St. Lawrence in mid-October to early November. Replies would not be expected until

the following summer. However, if the ships failed to make the crossing, due to unexpected circumstances, communication would be cut off for a year or longer.

Related to this problem was the fact that decisions concerning budget cuts and the dispersement of funds were often made by the premiers commis, many of whom had little real experience with the needs and conditions of the colony. Once these decisions were made, however, the intendant and the governor had to work with the results. Finally, accounting practices were often slipshod and hampered by the lack of viable communication between royal and colonial officials. But, in spite of these apparent weaknesses in the organization of finance, the royal administration insisted on the economic dependence of the colony and made every effort to suppress any expression of financial autonomy.[3]

The imperial demand for continued financial dependence is clearly seen in the tightly knit administrative structure within which Michel Bégon had to work. The preparation of budgets and the dispersement of monies were to follow a prescribed formula established in Versailles or Paris by the Ancien Régime. There was, nevertheless, some room for personal initiative in the management of these duties.

Therefore, the focus of this chapter will be an investigation of Bégon's direction of finance, with particular reference to his ideas on the allocation of royal funds. In addition, the study will proceed from an analysis of his spending priorities to a discussion of some of the practical applications of his work. Central to this part of the examination will be a review of the intendant's 1717 budget. An effort will be made to determine the allocation of money spent on various aspects of colonial life. Moreover, consideration of the budget will reveal some

interesting facets of day-to-day existence in eighteenth-century New France. However, an understanding of finance will be enhanced by an introductory survey of the types of currency commonly used in the colony, the structure of financial administration, and the sources of colonial revenue.

Finance in the colony was based on several modes of exchange. Foremost was coin which, although regularly in short supply, was the mainstay of colonial currency. Coin was introduced to the colony in 1642 with the founding of Montreal. As the population increased, the straight barter system of moose and beaver pelts for goods and services proved to be inadequate. Therefore, coin brought out by the Montreal settlers and churchmen was released into circulation. The French coins were soon joined by ones from other European countries, notably Spain. By 1669 a decision was made in Paris to rate Canadian coin at 25% above that of the French. It was hoped that the higher value of Canadian coin would serve to keep it in the colony and would counter difficulties of transporting specie across the Atlantic.

From this distinction between the value of French and Canadian coins, arose the terms "money of the country" and "money of France." Furthermore, in an effort to offset the inveterate shortage of money in the colony, the Treasury of the Marine had to resort to means of credit. Initially, they provided bons or promissory notes so that large sums could be dealt with more efficiently. After 1691 treasury notes were introduced as a temporary measure. They were followed, in turn, by the bill of exchange, issued by the Treasurer General of the Marine to his agent in Quebec.

The bills of exchange used by the colonial government, were also used by the official fur trading syndicate of Aubert, Néret, and Gayot.

The syndicate paid for furs in post-dated bills of exchange to be redeemed in France.[4] However, frequently the bills of exchange were not honoured by the French Treasury because of a shortage of funds. Unfortunately, this often happened when there was already little specie in the colony.

Thus, packs of everyday playing cards were introduced to serve as a ready money supply. Playing card money--the colony's answer to the chronic shortage of specie--was just that, packs of playing cards used as paper money![5] The cards, marked with specific denominations, could be purchased from either the agent of the Treasurer General or from the intendant with bills of exchange. Later they could be converted at the agent's office for cash, or for bills of exchange redeemable in France. The cards came to be used by the colonial administration and by the fur company for the payment of salaries, furs, goods, and services within the colony. Because the bills of exchange and playing cards were a universal means of payment, when they were not honoured it meant that many colonials, from highly paid officials to the voyageur and small shopkeeper, had to turn to credit to make daily transactions.[6] The situation was especially serious for those merchants who had to do business outside the colony, where the playing card money was not accepted as legal tender.

Four figures played an important role in the direction of colonial finance. The intendant, Michel Bégon, en principe had comprehensive control over financial matters. He was to answer to the king via the Minister of Marine or, after 1715, the Council of Marine. But, for the release of royal monies, the intendant and the minister were dependent upon the Treasurer General of the Marine, who in turn had to answer to the Controller General of France. Funds for the annual expenditures of the colony were authorized by the Controller General, then were sent by

the Treasurer General of the Marine to the caisse of his personally-appointed Quebec agent. From the caisse the funds were then apportioned on behalf of the king by the intendant and by the agent of the Treasurer General.

The means of payment was customarily a type of cheque drawn on the Treasurer General. It was used for the payment of salaries and supplies by the intendant. The value of the "cheque," however, was dependent on the ability of the Treasurer General ultimately to honour it through the use of bills of exchange.[7]

The intendant usually knew what was in the king's caisse. Further, he was cognizant of the guidelines sent from the office of the Treasurer General which stipulated the amounts of money the agent was to receive, the sources, and the distribution of this money. In addition, the agent was to register royal receipts and expenditures in the annual report of the intendant. However, although the intendant was likely to be aware of the agent's actions, the external monitoring system was weak. Because the agent had vast sums of money at his disposal, there was an opportunity for him to indulge in private investment outside of royal jurisdiction. Professor John Bosher points out that these agents of the Treasurer General, in fact, were often "profit-making entrepreneurs in government finance."[8] Their connections with officials in the upper reaches of the French government, and their close working relations with leading colonial administrators, usually offered them protection from any serious investigation into the mismanagement of royal funds.

Revenue for the colony was drawn from two sources--l'état du roi, the king's revenue, and l'état du domaine, revenue from the colony. L'état du roi comprised the funds budgeted by the intendant, which in

theory were to be dispatched annually to the colony from France. This source of money was to cover both fixed and variable charges. Fixed charges of the colony included pensions and bonuses, salaries of the justice officers and of the état major of the three governments at Quebec, Trois-Rivières, and Montreal, and subventions to the religious institutions. The salaries of the governor and intendant were a fixed charge and a budget item but were not included in the funds sent. In principle, they were to be paid annually in France in "money of France." In practice, in times of financial stringency, they were paid by installments, sometimes in treasury notes which became almost worthless.[9]

Examples of some of the variable charges were the maintenance of fortifications and building, construction and management of boats, water channels, outfitting voyages, and transport equipment. Also included were the payment of employees of the king's stores, rental of houses and shops, wages for day workers, and presents for the Indians. Other charges were related to firewood, provision of hospitals, and merchandise in the food stores. Further, there were the appointments of officers and other officials, and supplies for the troops. Finally, there was an allowance for unexpected expenses, and gratifications ordinaires, to officials such as Chaussegros de Léry (architectural engineer) for his regular duties, and gratifications extraordinaires, to men like Michel Sarrazin (king's surgeon) for exceptional duty. L'état du roi touched all areas of Canadian life. Therefore, one can understand the implications for the colony when the king's vessel did not arrive with a regular shipment of specie.

L'état du domaine, or the domestic source of funds, was inadequate to meet the needs of the colony. These funds, which were also sometimes

called the recettes extraordinaires, issued from the dîme collected by the clergy, profit from the sales of the magasins du roi or the king's stores, and the taxes and duties collected by the Domaine d'Occident. The Domaine brought in customs duties, land and congé taxes, the quart on the sale of beaver, and the 10% import tax on wine, brandy, and tobacco. Although the money brought in from the colony was considerably less than that provided by the Crown, l'état du domaine played an important role as a stabilizer in the colonial economy.[10]

The principal element of stabilization was the profit made from the sales at the magasins du roi. The stores were filled with the annual shipment of goods from France. Then the colony's account was debited for the amount of merchandise which was held for sale. As the intendant sold the goods, the debt was eliminated. Depending on the sale price, Bégon, for instance, could make a profit for the colony and, if the sales were cleverly managed, he could make a profit for himself. Because the military absorbed a good portion of the budget, sales of military equipment stood to be a means of profit-making for the intendant and the colony.[11]

When one looks at l'état du roi, one can see that the king clearly counted on l'état du domaine to help offset colonial expenses. To understand more fully the relationship between l'état du roi, l'état du domaine, and colonial expenses, a statistical account is offered here which represents the revenues and charges of 1713, 1717, and 1719. However, the figures are simply totals and do not give a breakdown of the expenses nor an account of the debt - which was a significant factor - contracted between the colony and the state.

	Budget	l'état du roi	l'état du domaine	receipts	expenses
1713	448.373	391.188	51.160	442.348	445.455
1717	350.545	322.522	260.257	483.279	583.125
1719	292.465	285.107	145.697	430.804	430.804 **

* All money amounts are in French livres.

** The figures under the budget column are the amounts budgeted from the previous year, i.e., 1716 budget would show up as the amount budgeted for 1717.

One can only speculate on the meaning of these figures. However, Bégon had made a firm appeal in the autumn of 1712 for more funding. It is possible that the increased allotment of 1713 reflects a response to his demand. Further, after 1716 the Marine, under the direction of the Comte de Toulouse, was intent on establishing more order in colonial finance. The intendants, including Bégon, were to make an effort to enforce tax collection and to more carefully order their accounts. The figures of 1717 and 1719 likely reveal the new directives coming from the Council.[12] In sum, it is clear that l'état du domaine served as a stabilizer in regulating the budget. Moreover, despite the uncertainty of finance in these years, there appeared to be an effort to balance the budget.

To explain in more specific terms Bégon's role as intendant of finance, the study will pass from the discussion of the structure of finance to the actual correspondence. The annual mémoires give the reader a sense of his participation in determining financial priorities. Although the foremost financial issue of the Bégon intendancy was resolution of the card money affair, because of its importance it will be dealt with in the following chapter. The discussion here will begin

with a description of Bégon's attitude to his job as finance official and then will proceed to an analysis of his arguments for the allocation of funds.

The intendant's first mémoire, written in 1712 to the Minister of Marine, Jérôme Pontchartrain, revealed his intention to restore order to colonial finance. In the first instance, he confirmed that he would initiate an investigation into the card money affair. He stated that he would begin by perusing the records of Sr. Duplessis, agent of the Treasurer General. Bégon then assured the minister that when this task was complete, he would suggest a means of withdrawing the cards from circulation and, further, that he would keep precise records of outstanding money.[13]

Bégon then expressed his determination to curtail excess spending in the colony. He explained that he had refused Governor Vaudreuil's request for funds to fortify the fur trading post at Michilimakinac, situated at the junction of Lake Huron and Lake Michigan. Bégon insisted that he intended to withhold the money until the king granted supplementary funds. Moreover, monies were needed, he stressed, not only for fortifications, but also for war parties. "The expense of going against the English," he declared, "has been considerable."[14] In addition, he wrote that he had not consented to more funds being spent on presents for the Indians, as the yearly charges had risen above the sources of revenue. However, although he was committed to control spending within the available resources, he urged the need for more royal finance to maintain Franco-Indian relations and to back the military effort. Without increased aid, he avowed, "We will not be in a position to give presents to the Indians which, by keeping their

allegiance, is very much in our interest, nor will we be able to outfit and maintain the troops."[15]

Retention of Indian allegiance was a recurrent theme in Bégon's writing. In response to the loss of Acadia to the English in 1713, the intendant appealed to the Marine for "funds to be re-established" to maintain the co-operation of the Abénakis and to support French colonials who lived in the Acadian region. He argued that money should be made available to provide presents for the Indians, to encourage their trade with the French, and to maintain their religion. He suggested that the presents be sent to Île Royale for easy dispatch to the Abénakis. For, he claimed, they had difficulty in navigating the sea in their "petits canots d'écorce" made for travelling the rivers. More pragmatically, he recommended that the presents be sent to Quebec where the Abénakis could claim them when they brought their fur down for trade to the French entrepôt. He pointed out, "Every year, then, [the Abénakis] would give us an opportunity to encourage them to recognize the French king's kindness."[16] Moreover, he argued that the best means of attracting them to the French trading posts was to sell French goods at a price competitive with that offered by the English colonies.

Furthermore, Bégon recognized that the influence of the missionaries and the mission churches was an important element in maintaining the allegiance of the Abénakis. In this regard, he wrote to the newly established Council of Marine, "I believe that the motif of religion is a most powerful force in keeping [the Abénakis] loyal . . . as they are all Catholic and attached to their religion. . . ."[17] Therefore, he insisted that the missionaries be financially supported as they served a useful purpose in holding the Abénakis within the French sphere of

influence.

Financial support of French-Abénakis relations was fundamental to the security of the colony. However, he warned that although the Abénakis feared the English, should they succumb to English overtures of friendship, they would be even more dangerous than the Iroquois. The Abénakis, he said, have "une connaissance parfaite de tout le pays."[18] Bégon's recognition of the importance of maintaining relations with the Abénakis was also extended to an appreciation of the need to support the French colonists living in Acadia.

When the English assumed control of Acadia, they made certain concessions to the French and Abénakis inhabitants of the region. The English promised not to interfere in the Acadians' practice of their religion. Besides, they offered presents to the Abénakis in the name of Queen Anne, and they agreed to carry out fair trading practices. These gestures were to be in return for sworn loyalty to the English Crown and to an acceptance of English settlement.[19]

Bégon expressed concern that under these conditions the French and Abénakis would soon become willing subjects of the English Queen. Therefore, he proposed that if the Acadians could be encouraged to come to Quebec, the consequences might be that the English would abandon Acadia for fear of conflict with the Abénakis. However, the intendant recognized that such an evacuation would be difficult to organize because the goods and property of the Acadians were now under English jurisdiction. Thus, to maintain the Acadians' loyalty under British rule, he suggested that the missionaries be kept in place to keep alive the colonials' attachment to their religion, language, and to the French Crown. Furthermore, he advised that the Marine grant monies to the in-

habitants for subsistence.

As another solution to the problem posed by English rule over Acadian territory, he proposed that some of the Acadians be moved to Île Royale. With the king's financial aid to purchase foodstuffs and shoes, he argued, the Acadians could clear the land, make a new life, and contribute to the establishment of a colony on the island. He wrote,

> If his Majesty were in a position to grant to the settlers a daily ration and to continue it for two or three years, they would decide promptly and agreeably to establish themselves on Île Royale, this would be a means of assuring "tout d'un coup" that the colony would flourish, and at the same time would assure the fall of the English.[20]

He concluded that it was "indispensable" for the king to establish Île Royale or, he warned, the English would render themselves "les maîtres de tout ce continent."[21] To expedite the royal decision, Bégon offered a number of suggestions which, he said, if they were taken would speed the move of the Acadians to Île Royale. He asked the French authorities to demand assurance from the English Crown that the settlers be given the right to dispose of their goods if they wished to leave Acadia. Second, he proposed that a French ship be sent to provide their transportation to the island. Third, he demanded that permission be granted for these settlers to sow wheat on lands of their own choosing, recognizing that much of the land on Île Royale was decidedly inferior to that of Acadia, particularly that of the Bay of Fundy region. Finally, he declared that those who wished to become fishermen should be granted support. He concluded, ". . . la seule attention doit être d'y attirer de monde et principalement ceux de l'Acadie."[22]

Furthermore, in the autumn of 1718, Bégon wrote to the Council of

Marine and stressed the need to clarify the boundaries of Acadia. He warned that if the English were to settle in Acadia, particularly in the Rivière St. Jean area, they would have access to Quebec. By this means, he said, they would soon make themselves the "maîtres du Canada."[23]

It would appear that some of Bégon's recommendations received support from the Council of Marine. From 1716, royal funds and manpower were directed toward the construction of a strategic and commercial base at Louisbourg, Île Royale. Some Acadians, although not in significant numbers, settled on the island. And there was royal affirmation of the importance of Abénakis-French relations in the annual shipments of funds which were to be used for the purchase of presents.

Public works constituted an important and on-going expense during the Bégon intendancy. Throughout the correspondence, one finds the colonial official's continued emphasis on the need for royal funds to keep the projects underway. His particular and personal interest was the reconstruction of the Intendant's Palace which had been destroyed by fire in 1713 and damaged again in the fire of 1725. In 1726, following Bégon's departure from the colony, Governor Beauharnois and Intendant Dupuy remarked that Bégon had managed to almost restore the Palace, in spite of the shortage of royal funds. Apparently, after the 1725 fire, the intendant had ordered the works to begin immediately and, although only the walls and <u>caves</u> had been spared, in less than five months the building had nearly reached completion.[24]

Further, Bégon continually stressed the need for capital to advance the fortification works at the western fur trading posts, and at Montreal, Quebec, and Louisbourg.[25] In addition, he oversaw and took a personal interest in the rebuilding of Montreal in the wake of the fire

of June 1721. And, he was particularly interested in road construction as the mémoire of November 1715 attested:

> We have now made the communication from the Upper and Lower town practical with palisades of cedar set in the ground and a wall built on the north-east which provides a bench for those walking.[26]

It would seem from the reports that Bégon shared an interest with Sr. Chaussegros de Léry, the colonial architectural engineer.

In addition to his appeal for funding of public works projects, the intendant used his position to request recognition, financial and otherwise, for particular individuals in the colony. For instance, from 1712, he began a campaign on behalf of his brother Claude-Michel, with whom he had travelled to Quebec, to have the younger Bégon awarded the Croix St. Louis for his bravery and "blessures considérables" suffered during the battle of Vigo.[27] Bégon continued his request for Claude-Michel until 1730 when finally "le chevalier" as he was called, received the award. The youngest Bégon was also to benefit from his brother's patronage, as he was granted land at Two Mountains and in 1726 was appointed to the état major of Quebec. Moreover, Bégon petitioned royal support for his colleagues, such as Srs. d'Aigremont, Chaussegros de Léry, and Sarrazin for their work and contribution to colonial development. However, one of the most interesting patronage appointments made by Michel Bégon was that of the "exclusive privilege" for carrying the mail between Quebec and Montreal to Nicolas Lanouiller de Boisclerc. This colonial official, and close associate of Bégon, received the monopoly of the potentially lucrative post for twenty years![28]

Throughout his intendancy, Bégon persistently called for the allocation of royal funds to aid the establishment of colonial industry and the diversification of agricultural production. However, as his

position on this aspect of the colonial economy is central to the argument of the thesis, a more intensive investigation of his ideas in this regard will follow in a succeeding chapter.

Part of Bégon's mandate as intendant was to supervise tax collection within the colony. Historically, however, attempts at taxation of New France had met with a consistently negative response, and Bégon's experiences in this respect were no exception. Furthermore, it would appear that Bégon and Governor Vaudreuil were sympathetic to the colonials' resistance to the payment of taxes. They wrote in 1714:

> We take the liberty to present to you that although the inhabitants of this country have not paid a tax to the king to sustain the expenses of the last war, as the subjects of France were called upon to do, they have, nevertheless, suffered greatly by the capture of a great number of ships loaded with goods, losses which they will not easily overcome, moreover, they have offered much corvée work to put the colony in a state of defense against the enemy. . . .[29]

Later in 1720, following a trip to Montreal to collect money from the inhabitants for the fortifications, Bégon described the difficulty he had had in convincing the citizens to pay. He reported that it was "un recouvrement aussi difficile qui lui attire les cris. . . ."[30] Again in 1723, he wrote that when he had tried to collect taxes, which had been imposed on the owners of boats, that they "n'ont produit que les plaints. . . ."[31] Bégon appeared to make a token effort to enforce taxation of the inhabitants by the issue of ordinances. However, it would seem that the attitude of the intendant and that of the colonials to tax collection was a clear reflection of their sense of estrangement from a metropolitan government which did not understand the local circumstances.

Bégon's direction of finance increasingly came under surveillance of the new administration of the Council of Marine. From 1718, the

official correspondence reveals the efforts of the Comte de Toulouse to tighten financial controls, and to demand accountability from his colonial officials. Bégon was criticized for his management of the king's stores. In July, Toulouse wrote:

> The Council has been informed that there is very little order in the king's stores at Quebec and that the accounts are often left a long time without being regulated. This is against the rules which must be observed and the Council wishes that in the future the accounts be precisely registered, the same is to be done with the accounts of the Controller of Marine.[32]

Further to this memorandum, a year later, the Marine called Bégon "to detail name by name those employed in the king's stores and to take care not to employ more than were needed."[33] In October, the intendant reported that he had rendered all accounts of funds expended in the colony up to 1720.[34] From this time, he assured the Council that he would manage the funds of the colony "avec toute l'économie possible. . . ."[35]

Moreover, during this period, questions were raised about the management of funds by Bégon's confrère Nicolas Lanouiller de Boisclerc, agent of the Treasurer General. However, Bégon quickly came to the latter's defense and reported that he personally had received no complaints from the king concerning Lanouiller; therefore, as intendant, he had assumed that the royal government was satisfied with Lanouiller's conduct. In fact, although Bégon had endorsed the actions of the agent, Lanouiller was later found to have misused royal funds. Lanouiller had been accused of withholding funds for payment of colonial charges and money for the salaries of the troops. It has been suggested that the agents, and Lanouiller was not an exception, indulged in making loans of royal money, often substantial ones, to the colonial officials. This

of course, raises the question of the complicity of the intendant in the matter. Although Bégon argued fervently in support of Lanouiller's conduct, it was known that he had made loans from the agent, as later did his successors Claude-Thomas Dupuy and Gilles Hocquart.[36]

However, Bégon argued in his self-defense that rumours relating to his personal financial situation and mounting debts in France were responsible for the queries about his work and that of Lanouiller.[37] The intendant's response, in fact, may have had some substance, as the broad issue of his financial management of the colony was never seriously challenged. In sum, the fact that valuable financial records were destroyed in the fire in the Intendant's Palace in 1725, and that Bégon took other records with him to France, meant that important evidence pertaining to his handling of the accounts was not made available for further inquiry.[38] Whatever the suspicions surrounding Bégon's direction of finance in the colony, he was not withdrawn from his post, he was subsequently appointed intendant of a leading French port town, and no formal investigation was ever launched into his work in Canada.

An important aspect of Michel Bégon's management of finance was his preparation of the colonial budget. The budget, compiled annually with the co-operation of the governor, included requests for funds as well as a justification of how monies would be used the following year. It was sent out from Quebec, with the annual correspondence, on the last ship to leave before the onset of winter and the closure of the St. Lawrence.

Arriving at Rochefort, it was taken by carriage to Versailles or after 1715, to the Louvre to be read by commis for the Council of Marine. Comments and observations were written on the margins by the commis;

then the budget passed to the minister or president of the Council for approval. On some occasions it crossed the desk of the king for sanction. Once accepted, the budget was confirmed by an arrêt. The monies granted were nearly always less than those which had been budgeted. Approved by the royal officials, the funds then were sent to the colony when the ships sailed for Canada in the spring.[39]

A review of the 1717 budget, prepared by Michel Bégon, revealed some important facts about the allocation of funds and financial priorities.[40] Three items took precedence over all others - military spending, merchandise, and salaries for colonial officials. It is interesting to note that in a budget of 284,990 livres, 149,634 livres (52.5%) were specifically directed to the military. This included the salaries and equipment for twenty-eight companies, each made up of thirty men under the direction of one captain and five lieutenants. However, this figure does not take into account funds demanded for military fortifications nor incidental military expenditures such as hospital care for injured soldiers, compensation for lost equipment, or food for the troops on manoeuvres.[41]

Bégon calculated the freight and purchase of merchandise as a cost to the colony of 49,780 livres (17.4%). Although this entry was the second largest budget item, it amounted to only one third of the funds earmarked for the military. Included in this item was the purchase of food stores to supplement the troops while on the march, and food for the up-country Indians who came to Montreal to negotiate with the governor. There was also an allotment for the Indians who were established in the colony, but who were in need, and for the Abénakis Indians who had come from Acadia to settle in Quebec and Trois-Rivières.

In addition, money was granted for the purchase of fine powder to be used in the cannon exercises and for the musketeers to fire saluts and feux de joye in the forts and towns. Moreover, there was provision for a supply of powder to be kept in the king's stores as a reserve until the arrival of the next shipment. Other articles of merchandise included in the budget were 1200 aunes (the length of a fiddle) of hemp material for making sails, carrying bags and cloaks for the prelates, and wood for the fires of the king's bakeries, offices, and guard corps in the towns of Quebec, Montreal, and Trois-Rivières. In addition, miscellaneous goods were added to cover the losses incurred by the troops in shipwrecks and crossing forests. And 5000 livres were assigned to the freight and carrying charges of merchandise for the expedition of goods by canoe, boat, and wagon from the administrative towns and the garrisoned forts.[42]

An item important to Indian relations was the "indiscriminate objects" to be given to the Christian Iroquois and Ottawa, when they came to converse with the governor general about colonial business. Bégon pointed out that money directed to the Christian Iroquois, and even to those not converted, but who came for talks, was money well spent as encouragement for them to remain faithful to France. Although the Iroquois officially had been made subjects of England with the signing of the Treaty of Utrecht, Bégon recognized that the Indians, themselves, had not made a commitment to either France or England. Therefore, money spent on furthering their friendship and co-operation was bound to be a good investment.

The salaries of the colonial officials made up the third entry of consequence in the intendant's budget. Sums designated for salaries

were 47,518 livres or (16.6%) of the total. Of this, 30,000 livres were set aside for the governor and intendant. Each received 12,000 livres salary and an allowance of 3,000 livres for freight of personal goods on the king's ship. Of note is that Bégon's salary and freight allowance made up 5% of the budgetary whole.[43] Other colonial officials were paid considerably less than the governor and intendant. For instance, the commis of the intendant were to receive 100 livres per month or, interestingly, 1000 per annum. The commander of the marine, Sr. d'Aigremont, received 1800 livres, and the controller Sr. de Monseignat, 500 livres, and the keepers of the king's stores, 600 livres.[44]

The wages and salaries of employees in the king's service at Quebec, Trois-Rivières, and Montreal comprised 4% of the budget. These included two writers in the office of the intendant and commis in the office of the controller. Listed as well were a watchman of canoes and boats, bakers, and interpreters for the Iroquois, Ottawa, and Abénakis in the three major towns.[45] Other entries in the budget covered the rental of houses, offices, and shops for the king's business. For instance, items of importance were a house for the engineer, a house in Trois-Rivières which served as a shop, a bakeshop, and prison, and storehouses for royal supplies. Moreover, also funded were meeting houses for Vaudreuil and the Indian leaders to be used for discussions of trade and war. Further, houses were provided for the governor and intendant when they visited Montreal to do business.

A reflection of the significance of water transportation to the colony can be found in these budget items. The construction, repair, and purchase of boats and canoes accounted for 5110 livres. Especially acknowledged were eighty-four troop boats and birch-bark canoes for

those who had to cross the rapids near Montreal - "pour empêcher les habitants d'aller en traite dans la profondeur des bois." Another entry was for the "maintenance of 15 canots de bois which would serve the governor, intendant, majors, commanders, and other officers for voyages which they were obliged to make in the service of the king. . . ."[46]

Funds were set aside for day labourers at Quebec and Montreal. These funds were directed to the workers who carried munitions and sorted stock in the king's stores. Money was also assigned to those mending and darning sails, sentinels' cloaks and bags. Further, an allocation of 3000 livres per item was made for the daily supplement or complete payment of hospital care for all injured soldiers.

Funds were also designated for voyages and journeys which had to be taken in the colony or into Indian country, and for unexpected expenses. Finally, a designation was made for "ordinary bonuses" to La Martinère, first councillor of the Conseil Supérieur, to widows, and to interpreters for the Iroquois. The final entry was 2000 livres for presents to be given to the Abénakis of Acadia.[47]

Council approval of the 1717 budget took place on 25 June 1718. Bégon's projected request for 284,990 livres was reduced to 281,763 livres, a slight loss of 3,227 livres. Small cuts were made in the entries for the rental of houses and offices, in hospital care for the troops and in undetermined expenses. What is interesting is the adjustment made to the section on merchandise. Here a distinctive reduction of over 20,000 livres appeared to have been made in the intendant's allocation of monies for the making of sails, funds to maintain Iroquois loyalty, and miscellaneous items for soldiers.

However, what looks like a reduction is really a transfer of the

20,000 livres to food stores, munitions, and presents for the Indians without specific reference to the Iroquois or any other tribe. There were also two additions to the budget. One was the designation of funds for the construction of a church for the Abénakis Indians of Medoctch and Naurantsouak and the other was for the construction of a fort at the Mission of St. Louis. These changes would appear to support other evidence that the Council of Marine recognized as top priority the funding of the military establishment and the support of Indian relations. By 1718, co-operation and alliance with the Indian tribes had become fundamental to the Council's economic and political objectives for the French in North America.

An analysis of this budget leads to three conclusions concerning the direction of financial life in eighteenth-century New France. First, significant monies were budgeted for the military establishment and for the support of Franco-Indian relations. Secondly, the extent of colonial dependence on royal finance becomes evident when one considers that the royal treasury paid for items like sails and canal repair. Furthermore, the colony's dependence on royal funding for the salaries of minor officials and workmen, whose jobs were critical to the day-to-day operation of the economy, revealed the hardship faced by all when the king's ship carrying the annual money supply did not arrive. Indeed, it was this dilemma that inspired the creation of a colonial currency to sustain the people and to offset the shortage of specie. Finally, the amount of money assigned to the salaries of leading colonial officials denoted how important the governor general and the intendant were to the administration of the colony. Further, the disparity between Bégon's salary at 12,000 livres with benefits per annum, and that of a writer's

salary at 600 livres or that of a baker at Fort Chambly at 120 livres, registers the distinction of labour based on class and occupation.

Decisively, throughout Bégon's intendancy, the colony remained dependent on royal financing. The intendant worked within the administrative structure laid out by the imperial regime, followed orders, and reported regularly to his superiors in France. The Crown's criticism of his management of colonial funds led to more accountability, but at no time was he seriously threatened with dismissal from his post. He continued to appeal for the retention of Indian co-operation in the interest of colonial security and trade. He backed public works projects, and he lent support to the endeavours of his équipe of colonial officials. In his ideas and action one perceives his commitment and personal attachment to the colony.

Chapter Three

L'AFFAIRE DE LA CARTE MONNAIE

> Le fait est que Monsieur Vaudreuil et moy avons fait de la monnaye de carte non pas suivant les fonds ordonnés parceque les dépenses les ont toujours excédés. . . .
>
> Michel Bégon to Scipion-Jérôme
> 8 October 1721.[1]

Packs of common playing cards--Jacks, Queens, and Kings--circulated freely as money in eighteenth-century New France. The playing cards, used as paper currency, were issued to offset the shortage of French coin. However, by 1712 the colony had been caught up in an inflationary spiral by the proliferation of card money, by an attendant drop in its value, and by the inability of the Treasurer General of the Marine to honour it with viable specie. Therefore, the king ordered that the cards be withdrawn in the hope that colonial finance would be stabilized.

The card money affair was the central financial issue of the intendancy of Michel Bégon. The discussion here will focus on Bégon's direction of the affair with particular reference to his ideas for withdrawal of the cards. Emphasis will be placed on the procedures which were employed and on the subsequent effect of the operation on the colony. The process used to retire the cards will be traced through the mémoire material, with arguments from Versailles or the Louvre being counterpoised against those of the administrators in Quebec. This method should illustrate some of the difficulties faced by a colonial administrator like Michel Bégon. Evident will be his often futile

attempts to regulate finance, when communication with his royal superiors was at worst impossible and at best uncertain. Because of this weakness in the administrative system, the intendant was often left to act on his own initiative. However, when he did so, he ran a serious risk of subsequent reprimand.

It would appear that the idea of using common playing cards as paper money was unique to New France. The scheme was introduced in 1685 by intendant Jacques de Meulles, an uncle of Michel Bégon. Finding that he had little ready cash to pay the troops and farmworkers, de Meulles decided to use playing cards as a paper expedient for the shortage of currency. The playing cards were marked by denomination. Then they were signed by de Meulles, who issued an ordinance confirming their redemption at face value when legal tender from France next arrived. In the interval, they were to be used in all transactions as regular money.

"It proved so useful a device," W. J. Eccles declares, "that, although regarded by the orthodox minds of officials in the Ministry of Marine as highly dangerous, likely to result in all manner of intolerable abuses, de Meulles' successors had constant recourse to it."[2] From 1685 to the arrival of Bégon in Quebec, there was a yo-yo effect of the intendants issuing card money--the Ministry of Marine demanding that it be withdrawn--and the intendants reissuing it to meet yet another monetary crisis.

In spite of the Marine's scepticism, the system seemed to work within the colony. The inhabitants found that playing card money was a satisfactory solution to the chronic shortage of specie. Moreover, as an indication of their confidence, they would often hoard the cards in the expectation of another financial crisis. However, the use of playing

card money was less satisfactory for the merchants and for those who had to do business outside the colony, where the cards were not recognized as legitimate currency. In these circumstances, it was necessary to convert the cards to French coin or to bills of exchange, which were drawn on the Treasurer General of the Marine, and which could be redeemed in France for specie at the current rate.

Nevertheless, the success of card money as a means of exchange within the colony, frequently encouraged the intendants to issue more cards than could be redeemed by France in one year. Furthermore, redemption of the cards was often delayed. This was particularly true in the first decade of the eighteenth century, when the Royal Treasury was short of funds because of poor fiscal management, maintenance of the Court of Versailles, and the high cost of the War of the Spanish Succession. The inability of the Crown to sustain colonial expenses meant that card money was consistently re-issued from 1705 to 1712. Consequently, by 1712, according to one colonial spokesman, Ruette d'Auteuil, there were more than 1,300,000 livres of cards in circulation.[3]

The Ministry of Marine responded to this predicament by demanding that the colonial administrators find a way to suppress the cards. The order, composed in the Spring of 1712 and sent in a "private letter," was one of the first received by Michel Bégon, as he assumed the post of intendant of New France. In this letter, the Minister of Marine, Jérôme Pontchartrain, called for proposals which would reduce the number of playing cards in circulation--indeed which would contribute to their suppression.

Pontchartrain said that he understood that the merchants had raised their prices "fourfold" in an effort to counter the falling

value of the card money. This, he said, contributed to the level of inflation. Further, he admitted that the Royal Treasury could not meet colonial expenditures, which was another inflationary factor. Nevertheless, he insisted that the only means to financial stability was to suppress the card money. This suggestion would appear to be a logical solution to colonial inflation, but it was not a remedy for the shortage of currency.

However, the minister offered a plan for the consideration of the colonial officials. He proposed that the merchants be encouraged to substitute their cards for bills of exchange which, in turn, would be converted into notes of the Treasurer General. The Treasurer General's notes, yet another line of credit above the bill of exchange, he insisted, would be accepted as debentures on the City of Paris, or cities of the generalities of France. "That is the only out for these cards . . . ," he declared, "seek diligently for expedients . . . take counsel as on your own account and report to me what you may devise."[4]

Bégon replied to this letter on 12 November. He said that the minister's proposal to have the bills of exchange converted into debentures would "bring about the ruin of the country." He explained that most of the cards were held by merchants who had to make their payments through bills of exchange which had to be easily cashed. Without hard currency, he stressed, their correspondents in France would cease to make consignments to them. In fact, this had already happened since the Treasury had ceased honouring the bills of exchange. Moreover, he contended that the crisis was not only affecting the merchants, but that it was also affecting the inhabitants who were now paying quadruple for their clothing and their provisions. The people of New France were no longer

able to provide for their families, neither the farmers from their work on the land, nor the artisans from their handiwork.[5]

Therefore, Bégon advised that all the playing cards be brought in to the agent of the Treasurer General and, thereby, be remitted for goods delivered from France at the current price. This procedure, he argued, would assure the retirement of the cards in a way which would be compatible to colony and to Crown. There would be a straight exchange of cards for goods, which would mean that an accountable number of cards--to an accountable number of goods--would be traded each year. Further, if the king wished, by adjusting his pricing policy, he could make a profit. This means of withdrawing the cards would be very satisfactory to the inhabitants. But, he insisted, if it were to be adopted it would be essential that provisions be sent immediately. In that event, he promised that he would burn the cards turned in, report the sale of goods, and register the profit.[6]

The reply to Bégon's recommendation for withdrawal of the cards came in the form of a Proclamation which was issued on 25 June 1713, although it did not reach the colony until the following year, because the king's ship "le Prince" was detained at Rochefort. The Proclamation, however, is worth noting for two reasons. First, one finds in it the minister's obvious displeasure that Vaudreuil and Bégon had not come up with a "suitable expedient" to solve the card money affair. M. Bégon's idea that funds be remitted for merchandise was "not practical."

Secondly, the minister announced that rejection of his proposal, to withdraw the cards on the basis of debentures held in France, would not be acceptable. Therefore, it was important that the intendant convince the inhabitants that this was the best means of restoring colonial

stability. Bégon was told that if he found the royal plan caused "derangement" in the colony, the king would be "willing to grant him power to suspend the cards, but if he were to make this decision, he would have to find another manner of withdrawing and abolishing the money."[7] Fortunately, perhaps, the intendant was spared from having to make a decision on this royal edict, as the king's ship did not make the 1713 sailing.

Without knowledge of these orders from Pontchartrain, in his November report, Bégon wrote that it was of a "nécessité indispensable" to withdraw all the card money and to make an account of what had been circulating in the public domain. Moreover, he pointed out that there were many cards "which were so worn that the writing and stamps could no longer be distinguished." This, Bégon contended, had led to much counterfeiting and much "false money" in circulation, although all necessary measures had been taken to discover who was making it. The withdrawal of the card money, he affirmed, would be a "great work," but absolutely essential. Accordingly, he concluded rather unrealistically, as he had not received royal orders, that he hoped to complete the task of bringing in the cards within the year. He assured that he would render count of those cards withdrawn, and would note the details pertaining to the effort in the next year's annual report.[8]

Other mémoires which were written from Quebec that autumn lacked the ring of confidence which seemed implicit in Bégon's statement. In fact, prospects for the colony were bleak. Vaudreuil and Bégon warned that non-arrival of the king's ship would mean increased hardship for the colonials throughout the winter, without their much needed supplies. Bégon noted that, as he had not received the order of military equipment,

he would be hard pressed to outfit the troops. The want of proper uniforms would mean that the soldiers would risk freezing in the months ahead. Trade was crippled because the merchants were unable to cash in their cards, and the report from Fort Frontenac was that the merchants there, not knowing what to expect, had been charging three times the value for their goods. Further, Bégon reported that M. Duplessis, agent of the Treasurer General of the Marine at Quebec, had been ill for several months, and as a result, the accounts were in disorder. Therefore, it was extremely difficult for the intendant "to regulate affairs" concerning finance.[9]

Finally, the annual correspondence announced the destruction by fire of the Intendant's Palace on the fifth and sixth of January 1713. The fire caused not only considerable personal and financial loss for Michel Bégon, but it also destroyed papers, statements, and records relating to the card money affair.[10] Reports describing the fire were submitted by Governor General Vaudreuil and by Sr. d'Aigremont, Controller of the Marine. Vaudreuil related that Bégon and he had dined at his home, the Château St. Louis, in the Upper Town, on the evening of the fifth of January. Following dinner, Bégon and his wife had returned to the Lower Town to the Intendant's Palace. Before retiring, Bégon had checked all the chimneys. However, a few hours later, sometime between midnight and one o'clock, the intendant had heard someone cry, "fire!" "That night," Vaudreuil said, "there was such a terrible wind and such penetrating cold that no one had seen its equal in Canada."[11]

Monsieur d'Aigremont wrote that it had been difficult to know where the fire had started, but once it had got going it had travelled quickly, passing along planks of pine which were full of resin and very combustible, to the upper apartments where the bedrooms were found.

M. and Mme. Bégon, he said, only saved themselves by fleeing "en robes de chambre" and "en mules sans bas." They were more fortunate, however, than three of their domestics who were "étouffés et consommés dans les flâmes." Moreover, M. Seuras, secretary of the intendant, had fled to the garden, but in his skimpy nightclothes had "la moitié du corps gélé" before he arrived at a safe house. Unfortunately, he died eighteen days later under medical treatment.[12]

Although the Bégon family was not physically hurt in the fire, they lost all their furniture, their servants, and their provisions. D'Aigremont pointed out that the effect of the fire was, for the most part, shouldered by Bégon. Destruction of the king's goods was much less as many important documents had been moved to another house before the fire. It was estimated that Bégon incurred a loss of at least 40,000 livres the night of the fire. Both Vaudreuil and d'Aigremont wrote to the Minister of Marine in support of the intendant's demand for restitution. Nevertheless, compensation was not forthcoming, and, although Bégon continued to plead with the royal authorities, he left the colony in 1726 with the matter still outstanding.

Bégon's proposals for reconstruction of the Intendant's Palace, however, received more Crown support than his appeal for money. He had argued that the palace would cost the king less than half if it were to be rebuilt in the Lower Town on the same land. He noted that sand and water were on location and use could be made of the walls and chimneys which were left standing. Further, the location in the Lower Town, he said, was ideal because of the palace's proximity to the port and to the centre of trade. The minister replied to his recommendations in the spring of 1714, and consent was given for restoration of the palace to

begin the following year.

Other correspondence dispatched from Versailles, demanded that the Proclamation of the previous year be suppressed and that a new procedure be found to retire the playing card money. The communication to Vaudreuil and Bégon, written on 22 March 1714, was unsigned, but it was most likely from the minister, Pontchartrain. He began on a sinister note saying ". . . this letter is absolutely not to be seen, except by you, and is not to pass into other hands." He continued with reference to a proposal, apparently made by Michel Bégon in October 1712.[13]

As the intendant's letter no longer exists in the body of official correspondence, one must infer its contents from this and other mémoires, related to it. It would seem that Bégon had suggested, as a final expedient to the card money crisis--that the playing cards be devalued by one half. For instance, 320,000 livres of cards would be called into the Quebec agent of the Treasurer General of Marine, (in annual instalments over a period of five years) and would be converted into 160,000 livres bills of exchange. An essential component of the scheme was that the bills of exchange would have to be easily redeemed for cash on the date of their maturity, which preferably would not be longer than a year from the time of conversion of the cards. Ideally, cards brought into the colonial agent in 1714 would be redeemed for cash through the system of bills of exchange maturing a year hence, in 1715.[14]

Bégon's recommendation was granted approval by the king in 1714, on the grounds that it was the only means of withdrawing the cards and restoring trade to an already beleaguered colony. A royal official, again most likely Pontchartrain, wrote to the intendant, "I regard this proposal to be the salvation of the colony." Having endorsed the recom-

mendation, he then continued by detailing the procedures for putting the plan into place. Bégon was told to make every effort to encourage the inhabitants to convert their card money into bills of exchange. If they were to show reluctance accepting the scheme, they were to be allowed "complete liberty" in the matter. However, the intendant was to make it patent that this means of withdrawing the cards was the only way to re-establish trade. Furthermore, he was to inform the colonials that if they were not to comply with the king's wishes, the cards would be retired for a certain sum, a sum "which would be more advantageous to the Crown than to the colony!"[15] The order from France was clear. Bégon's plan for withdrawal of the cards was to be initiated with little choice for the inhabitants.

Years later, however, Michel Bégon confessed to his brother, Scipion-Jérôme, that he had one regret about his years as intendant of New France. He admitted that he deplored his decision to recommend to the Crown that the card money be withdrawn through a process of devaluation. Bégon, like many of the inhabitants of the colony, was to suffer financial loss because of the card money affair.[16]

Specific orders for institution of the project were contained in a letter sent from Versailles in May. Bégon was told to prepare 160,000 livres bills of exchange, to sign them, and to mark them with the date of their maturity--1 March 1715--when they would be redeemed for cash by M. Gaudion, Treasurer General of the Marine in France.[17] Then, the intendant was directed to bring in 320,000 livres of card money to be converted into the bills. Bégon was given assurance that the bills would be cashed at maturity for French legal tender. As a means of control, he was to send a statement to the minister noting the bills drawn on the

Treasury of the Marine, the cards appropriated, burnt, and the profit made. "No preference" was to be shown to any individual. The bills of exchange were to be distributed proportionately on the basis of request. Finally, and interestingly, the cards to be used for the expenses of the administration were to be marked with a special stamp. Obviously, then, they would not be a part of the system.[18] The Ministry of Marine expected the plan effectively to withdraw 320,000 livres of card money annually on the first of March, over a five year period. At the end of the term of withdrawal, the card money was to be completely out of circulation.

On receipt of the king's directives, Bégon immediately set the plan in motion. He began by informing the inhabitants and government officials of the measures necessary to withdraw the card money. He and Vaudreuil worked together on the scheme, until the latter departed Quebec in the autumn for a two year leave in France. Vaudreuil was replaced by Claude de Ramezay, who would serve as acting governor until his return.[19] Ramezay and Bégon wrote to Pontchartrain before the last sailing of 1714 that the withdrawal project had caused little hardship for the colony, at least for the merchants, habitants, and day labourers. But they said that government officials and those not engaged in trade, in other words, those on fixed salaries, especially the Curés and Captains of Militia, had reason for complaint. Included in their report was a mémoire from M. de Monseignat, the newly appointed agent of the Treasurer General, who concurred with their appraisal of the colonial situation:

> The merchants and the habitants will profit considerably from the decrease of one half on the value of the cards, the former selling their goods much beyond twice the

> prices of last year and the latter their provisions in proportion: the artisans and workmen measure their wages on the same basis. Only the poor and those workers on salaries from the king suffer greatly and cannot provide themselves with a quarter of the necessaries of life.[20]

Offering a solution to the problem being created for those on fixed salaries, de Monseignat and d'Aigremont, the controller, suggested, clearly in their own self interest, that officers and others in his Majesty's service be given salaries made up of one half bills of exchange and one half playing cards. They said that this method would mean that those in the king's employ would lose only one quarter on their salaries, instead of one half. However, in spite of their appeal to the ministry, the proposal was turned down by royal officials.[21]

In the same dispatch, Bégon announced to the minister that to expedite the devaluation, he had devised three additional measures. First, he admitted that although he had contravened royal orders, to mark the cards for the king's business in the colony with a special stamp, he had decided that such a step would cause ambiguity and problems for trade. He pointed out that if the king were to provide the funds required for the next year ". . . all the cards [which had been taken in] would be burned and there would be no need for a special stamp."

Second, he explained that in accord with Vaudreuil he had struck a new issue of card money to the amount of 970,312 livres 10 sols, equivalent to "money of France." He had then carefully recorded the denominations and the amount in a procès-verbaux which had been made "in good order." Because the record was now clear, he argued that the colonial officials would know precisely the number of cards which were outstanding. "I hope, Monseigneur," he declared, "that in the course of next year all the old cards will be withdrawn and I will have the

honour of sending you an exact statement."[22]

Third, he reported that as he had found the settlers eager to take part in the plan, he had authorized the issue of another 158,055 livres 1 sol of bills of exchange over and above the 160,000 livres demanded by the Crown. Accordingly, the total number of bills issued in 1714 was 318,055 livres 2 sols. This would mean the withdrawal of 636,110 livres 4 sols of playing cards that year. Although close to double the amount of playing cards would be brought in during one year (1714), they would be converted into bills of exchange which were to be redeemed by the Treasurer General of the Marine over two years. Consequently, the first issue of bills of exchange endorsed by Bégon, in the late summer of 1714, would reach maturity on 1 March 1715, and the second issue endorsed by the intendant in the same period would reach maturity the following year on 1 March 1716.[23]

Bégon had acted immediately to strike another issue of bills of exchange, when he sensed the settlers' willingness to convert their cards. He had seized an opportunity, when the time seemed right. This behavior was often characteristic of his management of the intendancy. Some might call it pragmatism, others foolhardiness! Nevertheless, one finds in his direction of the affair from the summer of 1714, affirmative action and a determination to set colonial finances straight.

However, during the early months of 1715, unknown to the intendant, correspondence between Pontchartrain and two senior officials in the royal administration had sounded the death knell to the scheme. Commitments to Bégon and the colony had been made, it would seem, before full agreement had been reached among royal officials in France. The problem began to emerge with letters from Pontchartrain to M. de Nointel,

Commissioner for Commerce of the Marine, and to M. Desmarets (Desmarais), Controller General of Finance. The minister wrote to inform them that the devaluation of card money in Canada had gone into effect. He stressed that if the project were to achieve success, the Controller General would have to honour the agreement by providing the Treasurer General of the Marine, M. Gaudion, with the necessary funds to transfer the bills of exchange into cash. In this regard, he reminded Desmarets that he had promised a fund to be set aside for Canada of 160,000 livres, which would be discharged annually over a period of five years.

It was not long before the minister had to write again to de Nointel recalling Bégon's rather unexpected success in collecting the card money:

> I am very pleased to make you acquainted with what M. Bégon has done so that you may be good enough to speak about it to Desmarets in order that he may be willing to reserve the necessary monies for the payment of the bills of exchange, because without that M. Gaudion cannot accept them. There have been several presented to him already whose acceptance he has postponed saying he had not yet received the official statement, but as this evasion cannot last for long, you will judge from this the necessity of putting him in a position to meet these bills.[24]

The financial officers, however, were not very receptive. A month later, Pontchartrain wrote once again and reminded the Commissioner of the Canadian plight:

> I am convinced that it will appear just to you that the holders [of bills of exchange] should be paid regularly, in view of the loss they suffer on half of their money and the promise that was made them.[25]

Again, however, Pontchartrain had little satisfaction. The Controller General's office was unmoved, and as such failed to send the funds or instructions to Gaudion, Treasurer General of the Marine. The bills of exchange were not honoured, therefore, on 1 March 1715.

Continued inaction from the royal administration drove Pontchartrain to write three letters during the month of July, the third of which gave vent to his anger and frustration with the manner in which the Canadian affair had been handled:

> You know, Sir, that I undertook to have the card money in Canada withdrawn because of your consent, and on the verbal and written promise you were good enough to give me, that you would provide the necessary funds for paying these bills of exchange. Here we have, however, protest which destroyed the faith and confidence people had in their bills, which ruin Canada by the default of payment and besides that the Treasurer General of the Marine has been arrested- which is causing a frightful scandal.[26]

The minister concluded his letter by saying that when he had spoken to the king about the Canadian affair, he had seemed "grieved." However, Louis XIV was ailing in the summer of 1715 and by September he would be dead. Problems with Canadian finance were likely far from his mind that July.

Pontchartrain, next, wrote to Bégon and conceded that although he had made every effort to have the bills of exchange honoured that year, there would be a default because Gaudion had not received the necessary funds. Nevertheless, he urged the intendant to assure the inhabitants and merchants that their bills would be acquitted the following year. Further, he insisted that Bégon continue to withdraw the cards and to diligently keep records of the profit made. At this juncture, he referred to another plan which Bégon apparently had suggested as a means of retiring the cards. This scheme proposed that the bills of exchange be drawn on funds sent to the colony, rather than on funds held in France. Redemption of the bills of exchange, then, would be carried out by colonial officials in New France. "It might work," Pontchartrain said, "if one could be confident of regular payments."[27] But he made no further

advance of the idea. He concluded the letter with a reprimand to Bégon, demonstrating his personal exasperation with the whole affair. He charged the intendant with a clear infringement of royal orders. Bégon had used withdrawn card money for official colonial expenditures, instead of cards marked with the requisite stamp. This action was patently unacceptable. Sarcastically he declared,

> It would appear very odd that money which the Treasurer's agent receives at half its original value-that this same agent should issue at the same time on the basis of its original value for expenditures the king makes.[28]

Furthermore, he said that he was astonished that Bégon had not thought of the consequences of his action and that he had not "scrupulously carried out orders."[29] The note concluded on a touch of irony--the ministry, he said, was trying to introduce some order into the finances!

During the next few months there was change in the course of events in France which would subsequently affect the colony. Louis XIV died on 1 September. Power fell to the Duc d'Orléans under whose direction the ministries were suppressed and were replaced by councils. Pontchartrain was removed from office and, thereby, the direction of colonial affairs was assumed by the Duc d'Estrées and the Comte de Toulouse. The newly appointed royal administrators were even more determined to bring some order into the management of colonial affairs. However, the significance of the restructured royal administration was not perceived in the colony until the summer of 1716.

In the meantime, Bégon's annual report, written before the winter freeze-up, reflected the uncertainty and despair which overhung the colony that autumn. He acknowledged with uncharacteristic pessimism that he had held out "no hope" of Gaudion honouring the bills of exchange.

Thus, Pontchartrain's letter of July had not been a total surprise. Yet, it would seem that he had not expected the minister's degree of anger over his use of withdrawn playing cards for the expenses of the colony. Seeking an understanding of his action, he explained at length that it would have been impossible to have printed up new cards during 1714-1715, because Governor Vaudreuil was in France. To legalize the cards, he said, it would have been necessary to have had them endorsed with the governor's signature. In addition, he claimed that a new issue of cards would have caused confusion for those who couldn't read stamps; besides, he said, those holding new cards would have demanded full value for them:

> Issuing cards with a new stamp is to declare that the others are worth only one half and to provide an avenue to an infinite number of fraudulent bankruptcies. For example, a merchant would be able to say that he had 50,000 livres of assets on which he had 25,000 livres of debts, but that the king having caused him to lose half on his cards there remains to him not a sol to pay on his 25,000 livres debt.[30]

Recognizing this fact of the devaluation, he proposed another means of card withdrawal. Have the king decree card money for the payment of debts, he insisted, "as people always flatter themselves that [card money] will be worth more in the future."[31] Again, this would be a method of retiring the cards which could be administered effectively in New France. But this recommendation as many of the others, fell upon deaf ears.

Despite tenuous financial circumstances in the colony, the intendant announced in this report that he would withdraw another 320,000 livres of card money and convert it to bills of exchange which he hoped would "facilitate" trade. At the same time, however, he described the effect that the Crown's failure to honour the bills of exchange was

having on the merchants:

> It has been very difficult for me to calm [the merchants'] minds on this subject. They are saying to me that they are ruined by the default in payment of the bills on account of the heavy handling charges which they pay their correspondents in France; and those who are straightened in their business here, whose number is greater than that of the rich, also attributed to this the derangement in their business, although the majority of those who complain the most loudly had taken very few of them.[32]

The merchants' growing discontent over the situation was shared by the inhabitants. In a note written jointly with Claude de Ramezay, acting governor, Bégon informed the Marine that there were "restless spirits" in New France who would try to do anything to make the circumstances worse:

> The upset in the country is beyond all expression, whether as to gambling and general complaint of people of every class, or as to the merchants' refusal of the cards, saying that they will not be paid and that the cards will become a total loss to those who have them: they forbid them to sell for card money any goods that they send them.
>
> [The merchants] are selling their goods at an excessive price and [the habitants] their provisions in proportion, the counter effect of which reacts on the staff officers of the country and those of the troops and the widows of officers who cannot live at the present time, but can merely languish.[33]

They advised the royal officials to notify the merchants, as soon as payment from the Treasury would be forthcoming. This important dispatch should be sent through the English colonies, as the St. Lawrence would be impassable. These reports sent out from Quebec the autumn of 1715, in fact, marked the most critical point of the card money crisis. Although troubled conditions continued throughout the winter, some relief was found by early summer.

The Council of Marine's determination to resolve the card money

affair was no doubt aided by the presence of Governor Vaudreuil in Paris, who was known to regularly attend Council meetings. If nothing else, Vaudreuil's presence was a constant reminder to royal officials of the Canadian colony.[34] By the spring of 1716, in fact, firm direction in the card money affair was beginning to come from Paris.

Within a few short months of gaining power, the Regent recognized the need for a drastic change in France's financial system. He believed that he had found just the man to work what would be a minor miracle, when he met John Law, the son of an Edinburgh banker and goldsmith. D'Orléans and Law had become acquainted in the gaming dens of Paris where, according to Alfred Cobban, the Scot was known "to resort with a bag of gold coins in each hand."[35] The Regent was impressed with the fact that Law had had experience in the financial capitals of Europe. Furthermore, he concurred with Law's economic principles "that money was only a means of exchange, that real national wealth depended on population and supplies, that these depended on trade, and that trade depended on money." John Law's arguments, however tautological, convinced the Regent of his financial adroitness. During the month of May, d'Orléans granted Law permission to establish a private bank, the Banque Générale. The Scot, who had argued that shortage of currency was the chief deficiency in French finance, accordingly proposed issuing paper money guaranteed on the king's credit. Credit, Law promised, was the "open-sesame" to wealth, and, therefore, to power. At the outset, his bank was a great success, as it operated on firm financial principles.[36]

The first result of the system--the fabrication of money--was noted in New France during the summer of 1716 with the arrival of the king's ship. On board was a packet from the Council of Marine containing

funds for the last quarter of 1715 and the first six months of 1716. Gaudion had paid in cash the "greater part" of the 160,000 livres bills of exchange which were due on 1 March 1715. In addition, there was a clear directive from Toulouse and the Council with the terms of reference for future management of the card money. A Council spokesman, most likely Toulouse, said,

> . . . the funds which are ordered for this year and which will be ordered for subsequent years will be regularly remitted either in trade goods or in cash: the purpose of the Council is that nothing be paid for in card money. . . . There is to be no new card money made under any pretext whatever.[37]

Intriguingly, the Council's decision to remit funds for the withdrawal of the playing cards "in trade goods or in cash" was an echo of Bégon's 1713 proposal, when he had advocated the straight conversion of card money for merchandise.

Without doubt, the shipment of funds in 1716 offered some relief to the colony, yet there were those and Michel Bégon was not an exception, who continued to suffer financial loss, because of the devaluation of the card money. The intendant reported to the Council in October that he had been denied compensation for the 40,000 livres which he had lost in the fire of 1713. As well, he reminded Toulouse that he had been receiving his salary for several years in Treasury notes. During that period, these notes had become next to worthless.[38] Bégon's appeal, however, went unheard even by the new administrators.

The Council of Marine, nevertheless, was resolved to retire the playing cards. In April 1717, in an effort to collate information so that sound decisions could be made, it presented a brief on the origin and development of card money:

> It has been observed. . . that it is absolutely necessary to send one year's funds in advance [to Canada] according to the practice of former times, since only one king's ship goes to the colony each year: officers and soldiers must be paid each month, as everywhere else, which can not be done unless the royal ship carries all the funds needed for one year.[39]

For the first time, a Crown statement was issued which revealed an understanding of some of the problems inherent in the financial system which bridged France and the colony.

Unfortunately, however, despite the Council's determination to continue the withdrawal scheme, Toulouse had to announce by the end of April that the Treasury was once again short of funds. He said that Gaudion would not meet the bills of exchange for 1717. Thus, the card money which was still circulating in the colony would have to be used to pay for colonial expenses.

Despite the Treasury's lack of funds, the Council proceeded with its plan to retire the cards. On 5 July 1717 it authorized the procedures to be followed for complete elimination of the cards and acquittance of the bills of exchange. This was issued in the form of a Declaration of the king. Central to the Declaration was that the cards were to be discharged at one half their value. The final dispatch of card money was to take place during the last six months of 1716 and during the first six months of 1717. Following this, no cards were to be made. All outstanding cards were to be returned to the Canadian agent of the Treasurer General. Those returned in the autumn of 1717 were to be redeemed by bills of exchange in three annual instalments beginning on 1 March 1718. Subsequent redemptions would take place in March 1719 and March 1720. Significantly, all card money not returned by the departure of the last vessel in 1720 was to be declared

invalid. No longer would there be a distinction between "money of the country" and "money of France"--coin would be rated equally between the metropolis and the colony.[40]

From October 1717 to July 1718, numerous directives were discharged from the Council concerning financial affairs in Canada. They dealt with the regulation of officials' salaries, with meeting debtors' complaints, and with default in payment of the bills. Although a sound organization appeared to be in place, there was still difficulty in obtaining funds. In July 1718, the Council decided to extend the circulation of the cards for one more year.

That same month Bégon, in an effort to increase colonial revenue, issued an ordinance demanding that all ships' captains, officers, merchants, bourgeois, and habitants pay taxes on wine, brandy, and tobacco at the time of their entry into Quebec. The payments were to be made in "coined money" or in double card money. Subsequently, as the royal shipment of supplies and currency did not arrive, the intendant was compelled to release another issue of card money on 1 November. His decision to do so was recognized by the Council in May 1719; however, at the same time, he was told to proceed with suppression of the cards as soon as the ship arrived that year.[41]

On 3 June 1719, full payment for the expenditures of 1718, 1719, and 1720 was sent. All monies forwarded were coined money. Thus, Vaudreuil and Bégon published an ordinance relevant to the Declaration of 5 July 1717. The principal clause was that all cards not turned in by the departure of the last vessel in 1720 would be declared null and void.

As a final note, letters written from the Council in June 1720,

confirmed the payment of almost all outstanding bills of exchange and established a new system of rating coins to be used in the colony. When the last ship sailed from Quebec in 1720, for all intents and purposes a door had been closed on the card money affair in Canada. It would be reopened again on 2 March 1729--"as a temporary measure!"[42]

A significant factor in the resolution of the card money affair was John Law's reorganization of French finance. His system, based on the principle of an expansion of trade and the revenue it would bring in from the colonial empire, encouraged the Regent to grant him the trading monopoly with Louisiana in 1717. This privilege was soon followed by that of the monopoly of trade with the West Indies and Canada. Consequently, Law created the Company of the West in order to exploit these regions to the full. The pivot of his system was trade--the key to national wealth. By advancing French interests to all reaches of the globe, he had hoped to follow the English and Dutch example. But such expansion demanded investment capital--capital which was soon found wanting.[43]

In December 1718, John Law's Banque Générale became a royal bank and a few months later the Company of the West took over the companies of Senegal, the East Indies, China, and Africa. Opposition to growth of the Scot's financial power prompted him to absorb the Farmers General, the principal French tax collecting syndicate, and to outbid it for the farm of taxes.[44] In a final flourish, Law assumed the royal debt by offering its holders shares in the Company of the West. In 1720, the bank and the company united and John Law, now a naturalized citizen of France and a convert to Catholicism, was appointed Controller General of Finance.

However, by the autumn of 1720, the system was begining to crumble. Built on the expectation of riches from the Company of the West, particularly the exploitation of the gold mines of Louisiana, the system grew with speculation. But as the value of shares was pushed higher, the value of the company's trade dropped lower than the value of the paper currency upon which the system was built. People began to lose confidence and suspicion spread that the shares were overpriced--the speculators and the clever began to sell--there was a rush on stock. Law tried to keep pace by ordering a reduction in the cost of shares, but official reduction was unable to keep pace with the fall due to speculation. The rue Quincampoix in Paris became the scene of stock-jobbing and had to be closed by police, because of "disorder and bloodshed that the crowd of speculators of all classes of society caused."[45]

By October 1720, the system was in a shambles and Law had fled to England. There were those who made fortunes from the system and others who lost everything. Montesquieu wrote, "All those who were rich six months ago are now in the depths of poverty, and those who had not even bread to eat are swollen with riches."[46] New France, like those who made their riches under Law, was also a beneficiary. As a final touch of irony, colonial finances were stabilized, playing card money was almost all withdrawn, and the colonial economy began to operate on a base of coin exchange in the last months of 1720--just as the imperial system crashed![47]

Nonetheless, administrative tangles concerning the card money affair continued into the twenties. Much correspondence passed between the colony and metropolis pertaining to the rating of coinage and the types and amount of coin suitable for the colony's trade. Efforts were

made to settle outstanding accounts relating to card money, as French finance was set on course again--under the able management of M. Le Pelletier, Controller General of Finance, and the Comte de Maurepas, Minister of the Marine.[48]

In the wake of allegations from the colony about mismanagement of finance and missing card money, Bégon was told to render exact reports of cards withdrawn and burnt. He complied and sent statements in 1720 and 1721 of monies brought in and of all the card money made from 1702 to 1717.[49] In October 1721, he wrote to Scipion-Jérôme,

> As there was an abundance of card money, and difficulties with expenses the Council has asked for an account this year. . . . M. Gaudion, on whom one has drawn these bills of change, moreover, has not had the funds ordered from 1709 to 1717, presses me also to explain why one has drawn more bills of exchange than the Treasurer has rendered for payment. . . . The fact is that M. Vaudreuil and I have made card money, not following the ordered funds because the expenses always exceeded them, because of the loss on munitions and denrées that we have been obliged to pay on this money, also the credit built up over fifteen years on the bills of exchange not cashed. . . . We have made card money for all expenses we had to make and to retrieve all the old card money.[50]

In response to further complaints, this time that the agent of the Treasure General (Lanouiller de Boisclerc) had not paid salaries to the military, Bégon reported in 1722 that he had examined the agent's caisse. Although he admitted to only a "cursory" examination, the intendant concluded that the criticism had arisen from a misunderstanding about what the officers were to be paid.[51] Two years later he was again called upon to defend Lanouiller against charges of having drawn more bills of exchange for his personal use than Gaudion had authorized. If Lanouiller had drawn these bills for personal reasons, the intendant said,

> . . . it would be easy to verify the individual accounts if Gaudion wished to do so and it would be in his interest to do so if malicious gossip is responsible [for the accusations] as I believe to be the case. And, the investigation would be easy if you were to name those who had complained.[52]

In spite of Bégon's remarks, there is no evidence that Maurepas immediately followed his suggestion to investigate the issue more seriously.[53] And, decisively, the fire in the Intendant's Palace in 1725 destroyed records relating to the card money issue, so it became increasingly difficult to piece the details together--cards withdrawn, cards burnt, and cards honoured with bills of exchange.

The resolution of the card money affair would seem to be due to the organizational ability and the efforts of the Regent, and the Comte de Toulouse to order colonial finance. An interlude of peace and attendant French financial recovery were important factors in their relative success. John Law's system, without doubt, made a significant contribution to the clearance of colonial debt. It provided money for the redemption of the bills of exchange, payment of salaries, and provision of much needed goods and military equipment. The Council's decision to re-establish colonial finance on a base of uniform coin exchange, to abolish the distinction between "money of the country" and "money of France" led to the stabilization of the colonial economy and paved the way to more efficient trading practices.

From the foregoing analysis, it should be clear that the Council of Marine was aided in its task by the personal initiative and the administrative experience of the colonial officials. Despite their dependence on Court directives and the state of royal finance, they were able to contribute to the settlement of the affair. Bégon's

humanitarian concerns were transmitted to Pontchartrain and to the Council. Some of his suggestions were taken seriously and were instituted.

Faced with the need for an "expedient" to withdraw the playing card money from New France, Bégon offered four recommendations. The first was that the cards be withdrawn in return for merchandise sent by the king. The proposal, rejected out of hand by Pontchartrain, was later implemented in part by the Council. The second solution was presented only as a last resort--the devaluation of the playing cards by one half and then their conversion through a system of bills of exchange drawn on the Treasurer General of the Marine. However, this was accepted and put into place. In spite of personal hardship incurred by some, Bégon included, this proposition ultimately was responsible for resolution of the affair. The intendant's third suggestion, to redeem the bills of exchange on the funds designated for the colony, and the fourth, to use the cards for the settlement of debts, were rejected by royal officials. These solutions, however, would have had the advantage of being administered on Canadian soil. They reflected Bégon's vision of more independent colonial action--where management of colonial affairs would emanate from Quebec.

Investigation of the card money affair brings into focus the challenge faced by colonial officials. Revealed is the tension of maintaining a delicate balance between royal edict and colonial direction. This is particularly evident when one watches the intendant act as spokesman for the king and, at the same time, spokesman for the inhabitant. Yet, in spite of what at times seemed to be insurmountable odds, the playing card money affair was resolved. Cards were withdrawn and a

base of coin was established. Debts were cleared and trade was revitalized. The colony of New France in 1726 was on a firmer financial footing and more stabilized economically than it had been in 1712!

Chapter Four

LA LIBERTÉ DU COMMERCE

> La liberté du commerce dans le pays d'en haut seroit aussi un grand avantage que le Roy pouroit procurer aux habitants de cette colonie.
>
> Michel Bégon to Jérôme Pontchartrain, 12 November 1714.[1]

> Le malheur du commerce de ce pays roule sur le bas prix du castor.
>
> Michel Bégon and Claude de Ramezay to the Council of Marine, 7 November 1715.[2]

From the time of European contact, the Canadian fur trade provided the raison d'être of the colony on the banks of the St. Lawrence. Frenchmen quickly discovered that fur, as a staple commodity, could be drawn relatively easily from the wilderness and marketed in Europe at several times the price of goods exchanged with the Indian. Soon it was apparent to the Royal government that trade, especially in beaver skins, would be a means of augmenting the French economy. Hence, monopoly trading rights were granted by the king to enterprising entrepreneurs who agreed to secure French influence in North America. For the privilege of drawing fur, they would transport settlers to establish the colony.

By the eighteenth century, commercial empire and tenure of political influence were French objectives overseas. Central to this philosophy in Canada was the establishment of inland fur trading posts. The posts were used as depots for the fur trade, but also served to register political influence in the regions. "Politics as much as economics regulated the fur trade."[3] As a result of the strategic placement of the fur

trading posts, by the beginning of the eighteenth century the French had a foothold in North America. Their claims to territory ranged from the Atlantic to the western shores of Lake Superior, and from Hudson's Bay to the Gulf of Mexico. Within this context of political and economic expansion, sound relations with the Indian were of intrinsic importance. Fundamental to the establishment of Indian co-operation in the fur trade and in colonial development, were the missionaries who preached Christianity and allegiance to the French Crown. Maintenance of Indian co-operation, tenure of political influence, and development of commerce were consistent themes throughout the period.

This chapter will explore each of these themes, with particular reference to Michel Bégon. The documents reveal his interest in revitalization of the fur trade through the re-establishment and extension of the western posts. His opinions on management of the posts, transportation, and licensing of traders indicate an understanding of the economic and political ramifications of the trade. He wrote key reports arguing for freedom of commerce in response to imperial policy, which he believed was an inhibiting factor in the fur trade. Central to his ideas was a reorganization of the fur trade based on freedom from duties and price controls. He called for a system of competitive pricing, open markets, and a recognition of the force of supply and demand. At the same time, he stressed the need for a greater awareness of the relationship between the cost of production, labour, and price. Bégon believed that implementation of these proposals would counter competition from the English colonies. Moreover, he affirmed that free trade would maintain the political and commercial allegiance of the Indian.

Crown organization of the Canadian beaver trade followed several

unsuccessful attempts by chartered companies and independent financiers. Under the direction of Jean-Baptiste Colbert, first minister to Louis XIV, the Compagnie d'Occident was established in the mid-seventeenth century. Under the company's regulations, Canadians were free to trade with the Indians. But their sale of beaver and moose pelts was regulated, according to fixed prices, by the bureau of the company. From these transactions a 25% sales tax, or un quart, was taken for beaver skins and 10% for moose, respectively. The tax was justified on the basis that the furs were transported to and marketed in France by the company. The Canadians merely had to deliver their furs to the bureau. Fur drawn from the extensive region around Tadoussac was reserved for the company, and the profits went to the Crown.

In 1674, the Compagnie d'Occident was liquidated and Colbert then allowed a new syndicate, the Domaine d'Occident, to sub-lease the beaver trade, and to hold the lease for collection of all duties and taxes in New France and the West Indies.[4] From 1674 to 1700, the lease for the beaver trade passed through the hands of a number of financiers. In 1700, it was awarded to a group of Canadian merchants, the Compagnie de la Colonie, which held it until 1706 when debts and bankruptcy forced dissolution. The Canadian monopoly next went to a syndicate of three French merchant traders, Aubert, Néret, and Gayot. They agreed to take over the beaver trade by assuming all debts, obligations, and privileges. Included in their contract was free transportation of fur on the king's ships, and exemption from taxes and duties. Their lease extended from 1 October 1705 to 31 December 1717. With expiry of the agreement, yet another Compagnie d'Occident (Company of the West) was created under the direction of the Regent and John Law.[5] In 1719, it was decided that

the company, henceforth, would be called the Compagnie des Indes. However, faced with inflation and a drop in the value of fur, on 16 May 1720 the company gave up its right to the beaver trade. The monopoly was replaced by a system of duties, payable to the Crown, which were charged on Canadian beaver entering specified ports from Calais to Marseilles. But following the crash of Law's system in October 1720, the company's privilege was restored. It continued to manage the Canadian beaver trade through to the Conquest.[6]

In practical terms, the French fur trade was run from Quebec, Trois-Rivières, Montreal, and the inland posts. Central to its operation were the postcommanders, financiers, merchants, and traders. Voyageurs, who manned the canoes and coureur de bois who trapped and traded in the Canadian forests, were also important to the trade. The key players were the Indians.[7] Each year canoe brigades loaded with men, provisions, and trade goods set off from Montreal to carry on the inland trade. The departure of the brigades was always a time of great excitement. Canoes were loaded with merchandise in 90 pound packs--guns, munitions, wool blankets, and foodstuffs. Brandy, to fuel the trip, was carried in small barrels. Even chickens and pigs were known to be carried up country.[8]

The traders went in pursuit of prized Canadian fur--beaver, moose, deer, and marten. Also traded were the pelts of otter, caribou, lynx, and fox.[9] Particularly favoured were the skins of castor gras, beaver skins which in fact, had been worn for sometime by the Indians. As the pelts became softened, the rough guard hairs were worn off. The wool, or duvet, which remained, was perfect for making felt--felt which was much in demand by Parisian hatmakers who catered to eighteenth-century fashion. There was also a lively trade in castor sec, the winter skins

which were in good condition. Although bear skins were in demand, they were rarely traded. Their weight and bulk were always a concern for the French and Indian who carried their fur cargoes down dangerous water routes, from the interior to Montreal and Quebec. In a mémoire sur le Canada, colonial spokesman Ruette d'Auteuil described the arrival of a canoe brigade coming from the inland region.

> It was a marvellous thing to see the arrival at Montreal of five hundred and two canoes of Ottawa (the name given to the Indians who come from Lakes Huron, Superior and their regions) . . . charged with beaver and pelts which in four to five days, having done their trade with our merchandise, would produce more than 300,000 to 400,000 livres.[10]

It has been suggested that a revenue of over a million livres per year was drawn from the Canadian trade and that of this, 72% went to France.[11] Consequently, efficient management of the trade was of considerable significance to the colonial officials and their imperial counterparts.

Perhaps as much as anyone, Michel Bégon was aware that a cost effective trade was dependent on competent direction of the posts. He recognized the commercial importance of the effort, skill, and drive of the inland traders. In addition, he was sensitive to the willingness of the Indian to participate in what was a joint venture. Frequently, Bégon's dispatches to the Marine reflected his concern that the Indian be acknowledged as central to the fur trade. For instance, he wrote in 1713,

> . . . nothing is more dangerous for this colony than those who would encourage the Indian to go and trade with the English . . . for they [the Indian] would take their part in the first war, as they always declare themselves for those from whom they draw their goods. . . .[12]

Bégon's interest in an efficient, economic trade, and in maintenance of

Indian relations, can be seen in his arguments for the re-establishment and extension of the western fur trading posts.

In 1712, a debate began between Vaudreuil and Bégon over the reconstruction of the post at Michilmakinac, located on the land divide between Lake Huron and Lake Michigan. It would appear that Bégon was not averse to rebuilding the post, but he was reluctant to grant funds to the governor when the colonial caisse was nearly empty. The intendant argued that work on the fort could begin only if the king were to grant supplementary funding. A year later, however, although the financial situation continued to be bleak, Bégon wrote in support of Vaudreuil's request and announced that the work would begin. Evidently, the intendant had become convinced that the establishment of Michilimakinac would be a priority for trade and colonial security. He proposed that the fort be built as a fur trade depot which could also be used as a garrison for troops, staffed by a permanent post commander. The cost of such an endeavour would be minimal to the king because transportation of trade goods, munitions, and equipment would be handled by the troops, as they travelled to the post. Further, he said that the garrison, troops, and commander would be used as military back-up in the on-going French war with the Fox Indians of the interior. Re-establishment of Michilimakinac would have a "positive effect" on the Indians allied to the French. He assured that the presence of the post would discourage these trading partners from taking their "many furs" to the English, and it would encourage them to support the French in their conflict with the Fox.[13] These arguments, combined with Vaudreuil's insistence that a post be built, undoubtedly convinced Pontchartrain of the need for a French presence between the lakes. Permission was granted and the post was

built.

A year later, Bégon argued forcefully for the restoration of the fur trading post at Detroit, situated on the portage route between Lake Huron and Lake Erie. He declared that because of its "strategic location," the post should not be abandoned. The entry of fur and troops into the post, he said, marked French occupancy of territory threatened by the English and the Iroquois. Furthermore, he stressed that re-establishment of Detroit was essential. Good agricultural lands there would produce wheat which could be used to provision the other Great Lakes' posts, particularly that of Michilimakinac. The production of wheat was fundamental to the fur trade.[14] He recommended that the post be directed by two officers and twenty soldiers, men who would not "abandon their position for fishing and hunting but, who would carry on the trade like inhabitants." In addition, the intendant proposed that if the post were opened to licensed traders, the cost to the king would be confined to the salaries of the officers and soldiers. As a final note to these arguments for efficient and pragmatic management of the post, Bégon advocated that boats, rather than canoes, be supplied to transport goods, munitions, and troops:

> A boat with a crew of five men has the capacity to carry the load of twenty-five canoes for which it would be necessary to employ seventy-five men. Using boats would considerably diminish the cost of transport, and would be a means of re-establishing the authority of the king and the honour of France among the Indians [especially the Iroquois]. Because with the boats, we would be able to easily move men, munitions and goods for war expeditions. Moreover, they could be used to quickly bring our Indian allies [the Ottawa] down [to Detroit] in case of an Iroquois attack.[15]

Once again Bégon's arguments were accepted by Pontchartrain--a reflection,

perhaps, of the influence of colonial officials in shaping imperial policy. However, one must keep in mind that the royal government following its concessions of Utrecht, intended to maintain its territorial position, particularly in the western regions. Therefore, proposals from the colony, such as these, found ready support.

In 1716, Ramezay and Bégon urged the construction of French posts along the Mississippi and the re-development of Fort Chicago on the south shore of Lake Michigan. An active post at Chicago, they insisted, would facilitate the passage of the Illinois and Miamis Indian tribes through the Great Lake system. Not only would they bring furs to the French, but the presence of the fort would assure their loyalty.[16] Once more, the themes of commerce and Indian allegiance were closely tied.

That autumn, following Vaudreuil's return from France, the governor and Bégon prepared an important mémoire which would ultimately influence French penetration into Western Canada beyond Lake Winnipeg:

> The Council's desire for us to pay particular attention to the means by which commerce could be expanded has urged us to suggest that the most useful course of action for France and the colony would be to pursue the search for the Western Sea. First, by establishing a post at Kaministiqua [Thunder Bay], then one in the area of the Cree [Lake of the Woods], and, finally, a third in Assiniboine land [Lake Winnipeg]. These posts would be without cost to the king, other than presents, because of the great number of pelts they would draw.[17]

Appended to the letter was a detailed report, written by Bégon, entitled "Chemin du Lac Supérieur au Lac des Assiniboiles." [sic] In it he described, what would appear to be, the route, rapids, and portages from Lake Superior along the Rainy River to Lake of the Woods, from there down the Winnipeg River to Lake Winnipeg. Bégon's knowledge of the

routes likely came from traders who had been in the company of the western Indians, the Cree and Assiniboine; it may be that this information was widespread at the time. Yet in the French colonial records, this is the first clear explication of the route as far as Lake Winnipeg. Moreover, it would seem that the intendant not only understood the route, but that he also understood the implications of French advancement for commercial and political expansion. It should be emphasized that Bégon's document was produced fifteen years before the La Vérendrye expeditions to Lake Winnipeg and beyond.

A year after the mémoires were sent to the Louvre the Comte de Toulouse authorized the exploratory voyage of Zacharie Robutel de La Nôüe. With a mandate to establish three posts, La Noüe travelled west with eight canoes of men and provisions. A post was built at Kaministiqua, but the expedition returned to the colony before completing its task. Kaministiqua was later abandoned and was not restored until La Vérendrye went west. However, royal endorsement of the expedition had given new impetus to exploration.[18]

That same year, the English built Fort Oswego on the south shore of Lake Ontario. The French, in a hurried effort to counter what they deemed to be a threat to Canadian territory, constructed a "machicolated redoubt at Point-à-la Chevelure just south of Lake Champlain." Then in a further endeavour to oppose English influence in the area, the colonial officials began to promote the re-establishment of Fort Niagara. Reports written in 1721 and in 1725 urged that the fort, located on a narrow strip of land between Lake Ontario and Lake Erie, be built to lure the Indians away from trade at Hudson's Bay, and to act as a deterrent to English trade at Oswego. They argued that the post was necessary for the

"safety of the colony." If it were built, a chain of French trade and influence would be created from Fort Kaministiqua to Fort Frontenac at the junction of the St. Lawrence and Lake Ontario. Equally important, as the intendant hoped in 1725, the post would serve to restrain not only the English but also the Iroquois from French territory.[19] A final postscript to Bégon's commitment to the development of the western posts can be found in a letter, written in 1726, by Charles Beauharnois, newly arrived governor of Canada, who remarked,

> M. Bégon, in spite of the obvious lack of funds, has found . . . the means to continue the construction of Niagara. . . .[20]

By 1726, Michel Bégon clearly had recognized the posts as a financial priority for colonial trade and security.

A matter of significance related to efficient management of the inland posts was that of the congés or licences for traders. Central to the organization of French trade, the congés which granted traders the legal right to carry goods into the interior had been disbanded after 1698. Suppression of the licences had been ordered in an effort to curtail trade as a surfeit of unsold fur mounted in French warehouses. However, by 1712 Vaudreuil and Bégon had recognized the importance of re-activating the congés as a spur to commerce, and as a means of securing French influence in the western regions. The congés, they said, would be an incentive for the coureurs de bois to return to the colony and to legally work in the beaver trade. As long as the congés were disallowed, young men who had left the colony in search of fur and adventure would risk severe fines if caught trading inland. Bégon and Vaudreuil argued that these men would never return to farm the land. But, they said, "gens de cette profession" could be a vital part of New France, with their

skill in managing long voyages, carrying goods, and understanding the Indians. Moreover, their manpower could be used to mount war parties against the English or hostile tribes.[21] Following their initial arguments, they presented terms of regulation for the desired licences:

> Accordance would be granted to inhabitants of New France to make trade with the Indians in the west and generally in all areas where trade was allowed for the French, on condition that they received permission signed by Vaudreuil and Bégon;
>
> - the destination of trade would be specifically defined;
> - the amount of brandy to be carried for their own consumption would be clearly noted (from 4 to 8 pots);
> - congés would be sold for the king's profit (monies would go to the recettes extraordinaires);
> - congés would be granted first to poor families;
> - only goods needed for trade at the post of destination would be carried in the canoes;
> - contravention of the regulations would carry a fine of 2000 livres.[22]

These regulations, in fact, were later implemented by the Crown. The proposal from Quebec corresponded with a revival in the fur trade which, no doubt, was a significant factor in prompting Pontchartrain to accept the colonial argument. By 1714, prices had risen; the glut of pelts stored in French warehouses had been neatly disposed of by "moths and vermin."[23] Thus, twenty-five licences were granted by the Minister of Marine on 28 April 1715, according to the conditions laid out by Vaudreuil and Bégon.[24] Restoration of the congés was a victory for those interested in fostering trade in the west.

Michel Bégon, however, believed that the congés were only the first step in commercial expansion of the fur trade. From 1714 to 1717, he argued persistently for free trade in the west (pays d'en haut)--the key in his opinion to real economic development. "The freedom of commerce in the west country, he pronounced, would serve the inhabitants

of this colony, more than any advantage that the king would be able to offer."[25] Furthermore, he insisted,

> Congés would not offer the same benefit to the colony as free trade because commerce must not be dependent on the good will of the governor and intendant who should enter into business only to prevent disorder. . . . Traders should be free to trade without specific permission [even to the English]. . . congés would not outweigh the advantage of freeing the trade. . . .[26]

These arguments, in fact, express the essence of Bégon's free trade philosophy.

The intendant's ideas came at a time when the Regent and Council of Marine were looking for innovative ways to restore financial stability, and to revitalize commercial activity in France and the empire. Accordingly, from 1715 to 1717, many of Bégon's recommendations for the freedom of commerce were discussed at Quebec and the Louvre.[27] Terms were struck for regulation of the beaver trade, terms which were to go into effect with the expiry date of the Néret-Gayot monopoly in December 1717 (Aubert died in 1712). Jointly, Crown and colonial officials worked out a format which included the institution of clearing houses for fur at Montreal, Trois-Rivières, and Quebec. The quart would still be drawn for the king, but it was believed that local involvement in the trade would encourage the traders to pay the tax. Vaudreuil and Bégon proposed that furs be marketed directly in the colony, then transferred to France by those who had bought them. This method would free the colonial merchants from having to pay extra costs, such as freight charges or insurance. The profits gained by using this means could be used for fortifying the colony, or even "could be used for a more prompt discharge of the card money."[28] Just at the point where the colonial

officials believed that their opinions had gained acceptance--the project collapsed. The Regent, influenced by John Law's scheme for an expanding commercial empire directed from Paris, granted the Scot an exclusive lease of the Canadian fur trade. In August 1717, the Company of the West was established.[29]

The question of free trade, however, was to surface again, this time on initiative from the Council. A sudden run on the stock of the Compagnie des Indes, and retarded development in Louisiana, soon cut into the coffers of Law's firm. D'Orléans, in an attempt to salvage the situation, absolved the company of responsibility and declared the Canadian fur trade free and open as of 16 May 1720. Specifics of the order were that Canadians were free to trade with the Indians and the English, at prices in accord with French merchants and Parisian hatmakers. Furs would not pass through the bureau of the company at the point of departure, but merchants would pay an entry tax upon arrival of their fur in France, at ports especially sanctioned to receive the Canadian trade. The rationale given for this change of policy was that prices in a free trade environment would better serve English and Indian traders and, therefore, would reduce losses incurred from the contraband trade.[30]

Free trade operated for a year, to the satisfaction of Michel Bégon and the merchants of Montreal and Quebec. But, by 1721, France's finances again were in ruin. Law had fled to England, and Le Pelletier, Controller General of Finance, had reversed the free trade decision and restored responsibility for the Canadian beaver trade to the Compagnie des Indes.[31]

Protest was soon heard from the merchants of Montreal and Quebec, who found in Michel Bégon a ready spokesman for their cause. Bégon had

remained a consistent advocate of free trade. But in this respect, he was clearly at odds with the philosophy of Vaudreuil. The governor reported to the Council on 10 November 1721 that he had "refused" to sign a letter written by Bégon "from his home." Vaudreuil, who now fully supported the Compagnie des Indes, clearly objected to Bégon's alliance with the colonial merchants.

The letter endorsed by the intendant and the merchants declared: "We want to say that it was advantageous for this colony to have the beaver trade free."[32] They continued their argument for reconsideration by stressing that receipts and debts from 1720 to 1721 had been received on an equal basis and, consequently, that there had been a better balance in financing the trade. Independent merchants had found better markets with the hatmakers of Paris, so they claimed. The merchants were then able to give a higher price to the Indian for his fur, thereby, contraband trade to the English colonies had decreased. Moreover, they insisted that as a lively trade developed, more trade goods manufactured in France had been purchased, resulting in an increase in French trade.[33] Undaunted by Le Pelletier's return to monopoly control of the trade, Bégon continued to entreat the Council to review its position.

The following year, in a mémoire entitled "Au sujet du castor," he presented the clearest statement of his principles for free trade. The intendant urged Toulouse and Le Pelletier to consider his arguments for more efficient and rational management of the beaver trade. In order to meet English competition, he said the French had to pay the Indian more for his beaver. Further, blanket cloth and other high-demand items had to be sold for less than existing French prices. In other words, the Indian had to be given a market comparable to that

offered by the English. Restrictive duties and price controls had to be removed so that the trader could give the best price possible. In addition, he argued that restrictions caused scarcity and scarcity upset the balance of supply and demand. The quality of trade goods, especially blanket cloth and cooking pots, had to meet English standards. Finally, Crown officials would have to recognize the relationship between the cost of production (transportation and labour) and the cost of the product.

On the matter of the first point, in 1722, Le Pelletier increased the price to be paid for castor gras from 60 sols/lb. wt. to 80 sols/lb. wt. and the price of castor sec from 37 sols/lb. wt. to 40 sols/lb. wt.[34] Furthermore, genuine attempts were made by the Marine to improve the quality of woollen fabrics in the Indian trade. Although Bégon's proposals were not accepted as a programme for free trade, they did receive consideration by the Council and were implemented in part.

Accordingly, one finds their application in Bégon's policy decisions and in his economic direction of the colony. For instance, as general overseer of the magasins du roi, Bégon was responsible for budgets, orders, and sale of merchandise for the fur trade. In his arguments to the Marine, he emphasized the importance of competitive pricing and quality control of goods. Further, he insisted that restrictive duties had to be removed and that there had to be an awareness of the cost of production in relation to price if colonial trade were to thrive. Throughout his correspondence one finds an emphasis on retention of Indian co-operation for economic and political reasons. Moreover, his opinions reveal a sensitivity to the English not only as competitors, but as potential trading partners from whom one could draw not only goods

but expertise.

Gunpowder, of all trade commodities coming from the magasins du roi, was most in demand by the Indian trade. In 1712, Bégon wrote to Pontchartrain and urged him to send "toutes les munitions" but "principalement la poudre":

> You know, Monseigneur, that the only thing which retains the Indians in our alliance is gunpowder . . . which they find a better quality than that traded by the English, thus the security of this colony rests always on having a good supply. . . .[35]

Recognizing the importance of gunpowder to colonial security and to commercial development, in 1712 Bégon raised the price from 30 livres per pound weight to 37.6 livres. He argued that the price increase would offset the high cost of provisions which the king's stores had to pay in order to supply the fur trading posts. He pointed out that regardless of the price increase gunpowder would continue to sell because of its good quality. In a further attempt to generate the colonial economy, the intendant suggested that cannon salutes, on arrival of merchant ships, be reduced to "un coup de cannon" instead of the customary nine. This measure, he declared, would undoubtedly conserve the supply of gunpowder. Consent was granted. However, the minister's reply to Bégon's price increase of gunpowder was to order him to restore it to its former level. Here, it would seem that Pontchartrain was reacting as much to the intendant's arbitrary decision, as to the actual price increase. Nevertheless, Bégon acquiesced; ". . . there would not be an augmentation of price until orders were received from France.[36]

Contraband was a natural outgrowth of the mercantilist trade structure and the need to pander to Indian taste. Royal directives to Vaudreuil and Bégon consistently urged eradication of smuggling; yet,

such illicit activity remained vital to the colony.[37] The colonial officials logically maintained that illegal trade in furs and goods was impossible to curb because of the open country and the easy exchange between New France and the English colonies, particularly along the Richelieu River from Montreal to Albany. Moreover, as W. J. Eccles remarks, "Smuggling played a major role in the involved game of western politics."[38] The contraband trade kept open the lines of communication between Montreal and Albany. By supplying northern furs to the English trader, it deterred him from pushing further into the north-west. Further, continued sales on the illegal market also prevented a surplus of beaver remaining in French warehouses. And, the contraband trade was a means by which the Canadians could get English woollen cloth and other goods much coveted by the Indians and, thereby, run the trade from Montreal rather than Albany.[39]

Bégon clearly understood the importance of contraband trade as a means of checking English commerce and keeping the Indians within the French alliance. Nevertheless, from 1712 to 1726 he persistently argued that the way to offset English competition was not by smuggling, but was by offering higher prices for beaver than those set by the English, and by presenting good quality merchandise on a par with that from Orange. The ideal, he said, would be a free trade situation where prices would stabilize in a competitive market, and where the general expansion of trade by both English and French traders would enhance the colonial economy. Of Bégon's ideas, Vaudreuil wrote in 1719,

> M. Bégon is always of the same mind, that one is not able to do too much to favour those who come into this country to trade.[40]

Although Bégon argued for free trade throughout the period, the Home

government persisted in calling for trade regulations and for punishment of illegal trade. To comply with the orders, the intendant reluctantly issued a number of ordinances forbidding trade in "foreign merchandise," and in 1719 he demanded the confiscation of contraband trading goods. Despite these efforts, the trade carried on. In all likelihood, the colonial officials recognized the importance of smuggling to the colony and, thus, treated it with a deliberate blind eye.[41]

Illegal trade items most in demand were brandy and English woollen blanket cloth. For the French, trade in brandy was a particularly sticky issue. From the beginning of French trade and settlement in Canada, there had existed a tension between traders, who appreciated the importance of brandy as a valuable trade commodity, and missionaries who dealt with social disorganization and disruption--the inevitable result of brandy and the Indian trade. Throughout Bégon's intendancy, the Marine urged the colonial officials to reduce, if not eliminate the trade in eau de vie. The standard reply from Quebec was that every effort was being made, but the trade continued.

An insight into the dilemma faced by the Canadian administrators can be gained from a letter written by Bégon, in 1712, to Pontchartrain. The intendant maintained that he, like Vaudreuil and the missionaries, believed that every endeavour should be made to prevent the distribution of drink to the Indians. However, he said, the means of doing so were limited because one could not count on the Indian identifying his supplier. A possible solution, he offered, would be to have the missionaries witness the Indians' testimony but, even then, he declared, there was the possibility of false accusation and wrongful punishment.[42]

The minister concurred with the intendant, but at the same time

he demanded another order prohibiting the sale of brandy. Clearly, the royal administrators recognized the significance of the brandy trade in keeping the Indian in the French alliance, but they understood the importance of pacifying the missionaries' position. In an effort to balance the tension between trader and missionary, permission was granted to voyageurs and traders to carry pots of brandy (for their own use) on expeditions to the western posts. Official word was that the trade was to desist--colonial practice was to allow it to continue.

Perhaps as a product of his formation in the port towns of La Rochelle and Rochefort, Bégon understood the significance of woollen blanket cloth in the Indian trade. In 1713, he wrote that French commerce was "considerably diminished" by the "excessive price" of goods, particularly woollens from Limbourg. He stressed, as he had done the year before, that to compete with the English trade the French would have to "imitate" the Lowland wools or they would have to ship them from English markets on French ships.[43]

In response to his appeal, woollen fabric manufactured at Montpellier arrived two years later, shipped by Néret and Gayot. That autumn, the intendant reported that the blanket cloth had been well received by the Indians because they were very fond of the blue colour, preferring it to that of the English cloth. But, he added, the price of the fabric was not competitive, consequently, much of it remained unsold. He pointed out,

> The commerce in fabric is very prejudiced toward the manufacturers of France, and the colony is hardly considered, even at the present time when one is obliged to favour the Indian more than ever. They are dangerous and they worry us.[44]

To support his argument, he sent a mémoire on the fabric trade to the

recently established Council of Marine. Perhaps he hoped that the new administrative body would be open to considering a change in the direction of Canadian trade. In his document one finds the same principles which he had presented for reorganization of the beaver trade.[45]

He argued that if blanket cloth were to become a viable trade commodity, within the legal trade, then the Marine would have to adopt certain measures. He proposed that a sufficient quantity of fabric be sent to the colony at a lower price than that charged at Orange. However, he suggested that the loss incurred from the lower price could be recovered if the beaver trade were to be made free. Money gained on an increase in the number of pelts coming into the colony would offset the loss of exchange on the fabric. Further, he stressed that it had to meet specifications acceptable to the Indian: "It is necessary [for the cloth] to have a blue background with a stripe of white or a red background with stripes of black."[46] It would appear that the intendant's suggestions were taken seriously by the new Council, as a shipment of the requested fabric arrived the following summer.

However, in October, Bégon reported his disappointment with the blanket cloth. To the uninitiated, he said, the material sent from Languedoc was as beautiful as the English product, yet the wools remained in the storehouses while the ones from England sold. Evidently, to the experienced eye of the Indian trader the French fabric was not as closely woven, nor as heavily charged with wool. Therefore, to satisfy the astute Indian buyer, Bégon admonished,

> [I]t is important that these pieces of blanket cloth, in their colour, as their quality, be so well imitated that the difference [from the English cloth] can not be perceived by these Indians, so shrewd as to know the grade of fabric as the most knowledgeable merchant. Before

> trading, the Indian tests the fabric by burning some strands in order to determine their strength.[47]

As an alternative solution to the production of woollens in France which would be acceptable to the Indian, Vaudreuil and Bégon suggested in 1721 that fabric be brought from England to French ports. There, it could be loaded on the king's ships and carried to the colony. At this juncture, Toulouse was prepared to accept the advice of the colonial administrators.[48] The blanket cloth was sent by this means, but the price charged by the Compagnie des Indes still remained too high for an effective trade. In response, Bégon offered another option,

> The Compagnie des Indes would have a much better market, if it sent the castor sec to Holland [Limbourg] for purchase. The company would profit from a better market there and would not lose on the rate of exchange and would be able to purchase fabric at a price no dearer than what is sold on the illegal market at Montreal and New England. This is the only means by which we can prevent the English attracting the commerce of the Indian from the interior.[49]

Bégon's arguments suggest that he understood the European market. Furthermore, he could see how the colony might gain from involvement in a broader trade spectrum. Whether any of these ideas were adopted is not clear from the documentation; however, we do know that he received fabric in the autumn of 1723 with which he was satisfied. He wrote to the Comte de Maurepas and asked him to send 400 pieces instead of the 150 sent with a "white stripe" and of the "same quality." If done, he stressed, they would sell well.[50] After 1724, there does not appear to be further discussion of the issue. At least for a time, it would appear that the matter was settled.

Tenure of political influence, Indian co-operation, and commercial development formed a triangular base to French colonial policy in Canada.

As intendant of the colony, Michel Bégon made a contribution to the implementation of this policy. Bégon clearly understood the significance of maintaining French territory against English advancement, and retaining Indian alliances for military and commercial objectives. Within the context of the fur trade, he insisted on the restoration of French fur trading posts in the western regions. The posts, he claimed, served a twofold purpose, as trading entrepôts and as markers of military and political influence. He urged Parisian officials to complete the chain of posts linking the Great Lakes. By their position, the posts would create a retaining wall of French authority against Iroquois and English penetration. Furthermore, and in accord with Governor Vaudreuil, he argued that France must not only maintain her position but that she must advance west. Therefore, they proposed that exploratory expeditions be sent as far west as Lake Winnipeg. Included with their document was Bégon's detailed description of the route to be taken--an indication of the intendant's interest and knowledge of the western region.

In order for the posts to effectively serve commercial growth in the fur trade and to preserve political stability, sound relations had to be fostered with the Indian tribes. Bégon, it would seem, acknowledged this fact of colonial existence in North America. From the outset of his intendancy, he argued for imperial recognition of the Indian as an important asset to colonial security and French trade. He consistently stressed the consequences of maintaining the Indian in the trading pact. Furthermore, he argued that it was essential to offer him prices for beaver which would be in competition with those of the English, and to present trade goods of comparable quality to those traded at Orange. Loss of Indian commerce, he said, would also mean loss of Indian military

support.

Commercial development in the colony was of particular interest to Michel Bégon. Central to commercial growth was a revitalization of the fur trade. Bégon, in his arguments for expansion of the beaver trade, clarified its dependence on political stability and Indian acceptance. He stressed the need for an efficient, well-managed, profitable trade. To this end, he proposed restoration of the posts as military garrisons. There would be little cost to the king, because labour and transportation would be provided by the troops. He suggested that higher prices, and superior quality trade goods, would retain the Indian in the French trade alliance. He offered, as a retort to English smuggling, freedom of the beaver trade with open markets and abolition of duties and taxes. His reports on commerce in beaver and fabric gave impetus to some re-organization of the Canadian trade. For instance, the price of beaver was raised in 1722, and by 1726 an effort had been made by the Marine to improve the quality of wool fabric coming from France.

On balance, it would seem that Michel Bégon made a contribution to the triangular concept of imperial policy through his expression of free trade principles and his arguments for the efficient management of the fur trade. His ideas laid a foundation for further advancement in imperial expansion, Indian relations, and commercial development.

Chapter Five

LE MAÎTRE DU COMMERCE

> J'auray, Monseigneur, une attention particulière . . . à augmenter le commerce de cette colonie.
>
> Michel Bégon to Jérôme Pontchartrain,
> 12 November 1712.[1]

> . . . on m'assure que vous vous rendez le maître de tout le commerce du Canada.
>
> Jérôme Pontchartrain to Michel Bégon,
> 23 July 1715.[2]

Within a month of arrival in New France, Michel Bégon made a commitment to develop commercial activity. Moreover, he urged support from all those who would aid him in this endeavour. Accordingly, Bégon's pledge to expand colonial enterprise became the guiding principle of his intendancy; and one finds evidence of his hand in the development of agriculture, fishing, and forestry. His goals were to promote diversified domestic production and a vibrant export trade. To further these aims, he argued for a more efficient and skilled labour force.

In his ideas on commercial expansion, one finds a reiteration of familiar themes--an appeal for competitive pricing, free markets, and a recognition of supply and demand. Central to his argument is a desire for more colonial self-sufficiency at the expense of metropolitan control. This point of view becomes apparent in Bégon's management of the colony's finances, the card money affair, and the fur trade. It becomes even more evident when one investigates his approach to domestic industry, the

focus of this final chapter.

Perhaps the clearest expression of Michel Bégon's conviction is found in a mémoire written in 1714:

> [T]he difficulty of commerce in this country is our financial dependence on France and her manufactured goods. [T]he businesses that have been created here are never very profitable because, the merchants of this country will always be poor, because they draw more from France than they return. [T]hus, all the businesses which are established here are never able to become successful in satisfying the needs of the inhabitants.
>
> [T]he English at Boston have iron forges and do all the business which is needed for the colony. [T]his point of view is contrary to the motif of the founding of this colony which was to support the manufacturers of the kingdom, but the little return which we have been able to make here seems reason to prevail against the rule.[3]

Commercial growth in Canada, he believed, had been inhibited by mercantilist principles. But some progress had been made, even within this context; and this was reason enough, he declared, to direct his ability toward even further commercial development. Having identified the problem with Canadian commerce, he proceeded to give a prospectus for diversification of colonial industry. With reference to household goods, glassworks, and iron forges, he laid a plan for local participation in industrial growth. He appealed for royal support to establish domestic production of household items, claiming that the inhabitants were already making their own thread and sewing materials. The Sisters of the Congregation, he said, had shown him some fabric which they had woven which was "as beautiful as that made in France."[4] Therefore, he proposed that the colonial manufacture of fabric be encouraged. Furthermore, he suggested that a glass works should be built on the island of Montreal and that an iron forge be built near Trois-Rivières. Once the iron

forge was in operation, he stated, the sawmills, which had been obliged to stop because of iron shortages, would begin again. Glassworks, forges, and sawmills, he said, would benefit the colony in many ways, particularly by enabling further construction.[5]

Bégon's natural interest in commerce was greeted with scepticism from Jérôme Pontchartrain. Subsequently, however, his ideas received more favour from the Regent and the Council of Marine. They were determined to follow John Law's principles of economic expansion, through the promotion of trade and commercial activity within the colonial empire.[6] Support from the Council was evident in the progress which the intendant made in extending agricultural production.

A central fact of economic life in New France was the growth of wheat and the production of bread, a mainstay of the French diet. Consequently, any shortage of bread had wide-ranging effects on the colonial economy.[7] Disruption and disquiet, the inevitable results of famine, became the responsibility of the intendant who as general manager of the king's stores was ultimately accountable for food provision. His duties included dispensing grain for planting and issuing ordinances for regulation of the harvest. He also established mills, and monitored the sale of bread and flour at a reasonable price. Meeting these challenges was a test of his ingenuity and integrity. This was particularly true during periods of food shortages. In response to these circumstances, Bégon made every effort to bring organization into the wheat trade. He carefully defined the parameters of wheat supply and production. Then by issuing a series of regulations, he was able to advance his twin objectives of increased domestic production and expansion of the export trade.[8]

However, pursuit of these goals led to a tension between the needs of the domestic market and the needs of the export market. In years of abundant wheat production an even balance existed between the two. But in years of famine, a drop in domestic production was received by the colonials as an act of treason committed by the intendant. He was held responsible for insuring that there was an adequate store of wheat and bread, although it was recognized that the supply of wheat was subject to the vagaries of weather and other variables. For instance, maintenance of the food supply depended on efficient cultivation of the fields and on adequate transportation of wheat throughout the colony.

The first sign that Bégon was concerned with wheat production appeared in the autumn of 1714. Included in the intendant's correspondence was the ordinance which he had issued in January, prohibiting the export of grain. It would appear that the trouble had begun the previous summer when Bégon had actively encouraged the colonial merchants to export grain to Plaisance (Newfoundland), and to the French islands of Martinique, Guadaloupe, and Cayenne.[9] But once the 1713 crop had been harvested, it became evident that shortages were likely to occur the following summer. Hence, Bégon's ordinance refused permission to merchants for any further carriage of grain outside the colony. They were also forbidden to transport wheat from Montreal to Quebec. All colonials were prohibited from hoarding grain. Those who had a surplus were to sell it only to the bakers, and the bakers, also under edict, were not to trade beyond the colony nor were they to make biscuit.[10] This order, the first of many to be posted by Bégon, reflected the specific problems of colonial food policy: hoarding and the export of grain and flour at the expense of domestic requirements.

In spite of the order, however, the export of grain continued by some merchants and colonial officials. This practice eventually led to an accusation against the intendant himself. In July, Claude de Bermen de La Martinière, a colonial merchant and first councillor of the Conseil Supérieur, accused Bégon on three counts. He charged that the intendant had engineered the crisis. He said that he had exported grain to his own advantage, when others were forbidden to do so. And, he insisted that Bégon had demanded that grain and animals for slaughter be brought to the Intendant's Palace for sale and personal profit. The charge, of course, is a serious one, and it needs to be examined carefully.[11]

In the first place, the shortage of wheat was real enough. There had been a drop in production from 292,416 minots in 1712 to 236,049 minots in 1714.[12] Accordingly, Bégon replied to the councillor that because of poor crops he had acted in the best interests of the colony by bringing grain to a central depot, where he could regulate the prices and supply. In answer to the second criticism that he was exporting grain himself, he responded that "for the good of the colony," he and M. Vaudreuil had taken advantage of exceptionally high prices being offered by the Antilles for Canadian grain. Shortage of wheat in France that year meant that the islands had not been supplied with their regular shipment. Therefore, the profits which could be made from the sale of Canadian flour to ships' captains at such a "high price" would outweigh the disadvantages of scarcity.[13] As for the third criticism, he admitted that he had demanded that wheat be brought to Quebec, and that bread be baked at the Intendant's Palace. The Quebec bakers, he charged, had not stocked their shelves, because they had been selling their loaves to the fishing boats going to Île Royale, where they had found a better market.

Thus, he claimed, "the colony would be subject to a complete famine, if all grain were allowed to go to the bakers."[14] Furthermore, he argued that the bakers and the farmers had to accept some responsibility for the shortage of grain. The bakers had contributed to the scarcity, he said, because of their determination to bake white bread which fetched a higher price, instead of pain bis which was half white and half brown.[15] The farmers, too, he said, had to be accountable "as they almost never bother to cultivate their lands."[16] In response to La Martinière's accusation that he had rounded up all the cattle for slaughter at Quebec, Bégon insisted that he had to have meat to feed the troops in the coming winter months. Moreover, he also argued that by this method of bringing meat supplies to a central storehouse area, he could offer the inhabitants a regulated price in the midst of the card money devaluation.[17]

It is difficult to assess this matter with great assurance, yet it demands analysis because it was the most serious criticism of Bégon's management of the economy. In the first place, the charges were at least partly accurate. The intendant did prohibit the colonials from exporting their grain, and he did export grain himself on behalf of the colony and the Crown. However, how much wheat was exported and at what profit is not clear. Further, he did demand that animals be brought to Quebec for slaughter and sale. Yet what is at issue is whether the intendant had acted in his own interest, as La Martinière charged, or whether he had acted for the benefit of the colony.

Perhaps it is useful to note, as a reminder, that New France in the summer of 1714 was not only suffering from drought conditions, particularly in the Quebec region, but it was also in the throes of a financial crisis. Card money was being withdrawn at one half its value, and there was a

shortage of currency for trade. Moreover, it was clear that those on fixed income in the king's employ and the troops, who were dependent on food and clothing from the intendant's depot, were especially vulnerable under these economic conditions.[18] However, the merchants and farmers were not as poorly off, as they were able to raise their prices to counter inflation. Therefore, merchants like La Martinière who had enjoyed the profits from the export trade of 1713, no doubt treated the January ordinance with scepticism. But when they were faced with the regulation their response, to the intendant and the governor exporting grain that summer, was bound to be one of envy and anger.

The principal question is whether Bégon, by his procedures, tried to corner the food supply so that he could make personal gain. Unfortunately, the records fail here, as they only confirm that grain was shipped to the Antilles in the vessel of a La Rochelle merchant, known to Bégon. It is not noted how much grain was shipped nor what profit was made. In addition, it must be stressed that it was common practice for colonial officials to take part in commerce. In fact, the officials expected that sales, made on behalf of the colony, would offer a personal return. What is more, the Crown itself had the same expectation![19]

Therefore, in the final analysis, it would appear that the ordinance of January could be justified as a perfectly sound measure, taken by an intendant who faced adverse crop conditions. Secondly, given the climate of financial instability, his sale of grain, bread and meat at regulated prices can be defended. As for his personal involvement in the export of grain, this can only be defended by his argument that profits from state-controlled export, as opposed to those of private merchants, would benefit the entire colony. Exactly what those state profits were

in 1714, is unknown; nor is it known whether Bégon drew any personal profit from this venture. What does seem possible, if not probable, is that La Martinière's accusation was as motivated by personal resentment and self interest as by a genuine concern for colonial welfare. However, if the intendant erred, he did so in not anticipating the colonial reaction to his decisions.[20] Moreover, and perhaps more importantly, he apparently did not foresee that the colonial charges of mismanagement would inevitably reach the Marine, and would provoke admonition from Versailles.[21]

In spite of these events, it is interesting to note that the annual report of 1715 was very much an echo of that dispatched the previous year. Again the harvest was poor in the Quebec region, the settlers were hoarding their grain and flour, and now Bégon was complaining that some merchants had made themselves "maîtres" of the price of wheat and bread. Once more, despite the earlier charges that he had hoarded and transported grain to Quebec for his own gain on the export market, Bégon instituted measures for storing flour at the Intendant's Palace and for making bread. He ordered that flour, peas, and grain for seeding be sent down to Quebec from the areas near Montreal and Trois-Rivières. He argued that it was essential to have flour for baking bread in Quebec, so that the fishing boats going to Île Royale would be adequately provisioned.[22]

It seems clear that the crises of 1714 and 1715 had sharpened the intendant's perception of the inherent liabilities, of balancing the domestic market against the export trade. By the autumn of 1715, he had become fully cognizant of this reality. He wrote,

> The trade in flour would be of great benefit for the colony if one could . . . release only the excess not necessary for the inhabitants of the colony.[23]

Although there had been colonial dissent toward some of Bégon's methods, his objective of agricultural development found ready support in the Council of Marine. In the spring of 1716, the Council issued a brief to all colonial officials on the subject of commerce:

> The Council of Marine considers the colony of Canada of all the French colonies, to be the one that costs the king the most; and from which the king and the kingdom draw the least. . . . Therefore, good use must be made of labour and production. All efforts should be directed to increasing commercial activity.[24]

Perhaps confident that the Council would recognize the importance of trade and commerce, Bégon re-established the export of grain to the French islands.

However, the summer of 1717 was hot and dry and drought conditions again brought inadequate crops. Bégon, once more, issued an ordinance prohibiting the export of grain, but there were complaints that it was not being enforced. Governor Vaudreuil, for one, argued vehemently that Bégon had refused to listen to his advice on how to prevent the famine. The colony, he said, was in a serious situation because "M. Bégon would not work with me to prevent this ill." As a result of their difference of opinion, Vaudreuil asked the Council to grant to him power to override the intendant's decisions.[25] The need to do so, however, did not arise as the crops of the following year were abundant, and grain was exported under the auspices of both officials.

Furthermore, royal approval for the continuation of the export trade came in the summer of 1718. The Regent, influenced by John Law, was intent on promoting trade and colonial enterprise.

> His Majesty has approved of the fact that Srs. Vaudreuil and Bégon have forbidden the export trade of flour from the colony in the fear that there will be shortages on the domestic market.

> This trade, however, is so profitable that they must restore it every year while assuring, nevertheless, that there always remains enough flour in the colony for the sustenance of the people.[26]

D'Orléan's acknowledgement of the colonial export trade recognized that New France was an integral part of the French commercial empire.

Further stimulation to the export trade in wheat came from the Crown with the establishment of a garrison at Louisbourg, Île Royale. Begon argued that construction of Louisbourg and development of the Louisbourg market would not only benefit the colony, but it would also benefit inhabitants of Île Royale. For, he pointed out, they would not want as long as they had Quebec as a supplier of foodstuffs. As proof of his commitment, in the summer of 1718, he sent 1000 quintals of flour and a load of peas to the island. The Council's response to his report on trade with Louisbourg was a scrawled "bon" in the margin.[27] From 1719, there were a number of good harvests which clearly favoured the extension of the export trade to Île Royale and to the French West Indies. But the export market, although expanding, had its problems. In 1718, the Council reported that officials in Martinique had complained that flour from Canada had arrived, but that it was found to be rotting in its barrels. Two years later, again from Martinique, was the report that the flour which had arrived from Canada was "too dark," had a "bad odour," and that it was packed in barrels which were too small. The Council stressed that if the export trade were to continue, Vaudreuil and Bégon would have to give assurance that these problems would end.[28]

Michel Bégon believed that agricultural growth could be achieved by the diversification of production. He strongly advocated the cultivation of peas and hemp as a complement to wheat. As a result, the growing of peas significantly increased during the Bégon intendancy and became

a staple food product of the fur and fishing industries. Moreover, peas found a ready market in the Antilles and Île Royale.[29]

Cultivation of hemp also increased during Bégon's tenure, but not without considerable effort on the part of the intendant. With the fishing industry well established off the Grand Banks, and with a beginning ship building industry, and regular maritime travel, hemp for rope making was an obviously marketable commodity. Not so! Bégon wrote in 1714 that the inhabitants were not interested in growing hemp. The farmers complained that it was too expensive to grow, much more so than flax, and that a shortage of farm workers made their task impossible. However, with seeds sent from France and encouragement from the intendant, in 1718, Bégon was able to report that hemp was growing well. The following year the Council noted that rope from Canadian hemp was "more beautiful and better than that from France." In view of this success, d'Orléans expressed regret that the colony was not producing more for the home market. In an effort to increase the return, he offered a price rise and sent more seeds to the colony. In addition, he pointed out that new markets could be found in Norway and Sweden. He urged Bégon to make a particular effort to promote hemp cultivation.[30]

Correspondingly, in the autumn of 1724, Bégon reported that there had been an increase in the growth and sale of hemp. An important element in the increase, undoubtedly, was the fact that he had arbitrarily raised the price to be given to the producers from 24 livres/quintal to 60 livres/quintal. Fortunately, the Crown endorsed his decision. Therefore, in reply to the letter of consent from France, he wrote,

> . . . I will continue to encourage the farmers by telling them that the price awarded by his Majesty of 60 livres/quintal is really a supplement to improve the life of the colony from which all can profit.[31]

Hence, the Marine and the intendant worked together to foster the cultivation and sale of hemp. Consequently, when Intendant Dupuy arrived in New France, in the autumn of 1726, he remarked upon the diversification of agricultural products, noting the harvest of hemp, peas, oats, barley, linen, and tobacco.[32]

Bégon's interest in diversification of agriculture extended to the colony's livestock. Shortly after his arrival in Quebec, he argued that the number of horses had to be reduced because of their consumption of large quantities of hay. Fewer horses, he said, would increase the stock of horned-beasts feeding on the same hay. Nevertheless, he recognized that it was important to have horses in the colony for working the land,hauling wood, and transporting wheat. But, he declared, these would be their only uses. They should not be used for frivolous means. Therefore, the intendant insisted that the inhabitants did not need horses during the winter for their personal transportation. Accordingly, he suggested that the colonials travel throughout the colony on snowshoes. Although the settlers were often receptive to Bégon's ideas, they were not prepared to give up their beloved horses, especially in the winter. The people of New France were known to pride themselves on speeding over the snow and the frozen St. Lawrence in their horse drawn cabrioles. Significantly, the number of horses in the colony in 1726 was no less than it had been in 1712![33]

Bégon, however, was successful in convincing the colonials to enlarge their herds of other types of livestock, notably cattle, pigs, and sheep. This increase led to an expansion in related industries, such as leather making. Under his direction, the tannery begun by Jean Talon, the first intendant of Canada, was re-established on the banks of

the St. Charles river, opposite the Intendant's Palace. Bégon created a "veritable hive of industry producing not only prepared skins, but also finished articles like shoes, leather, trunks, and belts." The tannery nurtured under the intendant's guidance remained active until the Seven Year's War. It would seem that Bégon's relative success in increasing and diversifying agricultural production was owing to his own keen interest, Council support, and the stabilization of finance.[34] The growth of the fishing industry, like agriculture, was dependent on the same factors.

The fisheries, as a producer of a staple commodity, ranked second to the fur trade. Fish was traded to France for manufactured goods, and to the West Indies for agricultural products such as sugar. Direction of the cod fisheries fell under metropolitan jurisdiction. However, the colonial administrators took an active part in provisioning the trade with foodstuffs and equipment from Quebec.[35] They also assumed responsibility for the inland fisheries. Following 1713 and the loss of Newfoundland and Acadia to the English, it was feared that there would be a decrease in fishing revenue. Therefore, interest heightened in fishing along the banks of the St. Lawrence.[36]

Early in his tenure, Michel Bégon promised "to encourage the merchants of New France to contribute to the re-establishment of the inland fisheries." His goal was to promote the fisheries for a more viable domestic production and a more viable export trade.[37] He was particularly interested in expanding the porpoise fisheries, which had been established in the estuary of the St. Lawrence. During the spring and autumn, the cool waters of the river drew the big fish up stream to where they were easily caught in nets which were strung from island to island in the Sept-Iles region. Bégon recognized that the

porpoise was an important fish for both the internal and the external markets. The skins and oil were highly valued by the colonials and by their counterparts in France. Acknowledging the market potential of the fish, the intendant thereby proceeded to develop the export market. According to Alain Laberge,

> . . . Bégon had a tenacious preoccupation to use the products of the porpoise fisheries for the export trade, thus, to aid the shaky Canadian economy at the beginning of the eighteenth century.[38]

The intendant's interest, in furthering the export trade in porpoise products, was consistent with his determination to promote colonial self-sufficiency. This he tried to do through the diversification of production and trade.

Administration of the fisheries was through monopoly. However, by 1710 colonials who lived along the St. Lawrence had begun to demand fishing rights to the waters in front of their lands. Intendant Raudot and subsequently Bégon, issued ordinances allowing more community participation in river fishing, although the monopoly rights of the entrepreneurs remained secure until 1720. In January 1721, Bégon issued an ordinance which granted the ten year privilege of the porpoise fisheries, to Louis Deschamps de Boishébert and Philippe Peire. By the new agreement, however, they were only given the established fisheries. Should they wish areas other than those stipulated in the agreement, they first had to gain permission from the seigneurs or habitants who held the land adjacent to the water. This rule upheld the order of 1710 which conceded habitant rights to the inland waters.[39] Under increased pressure from the colonials who wanted more access to the fishing grounds, Bégon pub-

lished an ordinance in July 1722, giving the Société des habitants de la Petite-Rivière the privilege to establish two porpoise fisheries on the St. Lawrence. Terms of the order demanded the co-operation of the habitants in covering the expenses, furnishing equipment, and sharing profits.[40] Monopoly control of the fisheries had been eroding by 1720; after the ordinance of 1722, it was contested in a way that had not been predicted. Laberge remarks,

> Rather than considering the monopoly as an exclusive right to benefit only the holders, and to relate only indirectly to the economic life of the colony, the intendant decided to use the privileges of the porpoise industry as an incitement to augment and to diversify the Canadian economy.[41]

He suggests that paradoxically, Bégon, in his effort to expand the porpoise fisheries, actually impeded their growth. By extending fishing rights, increased competition cut away the profits. It would seem that Bégon had made "une mauvaise évaluation." In his determination to create another commodity for the export trade, he had overestimated the means of viable production.[42]

In economic terms, the experiment to expand the porpoise fisheries appeared to have failed. But in ideological terms, Michel Bégon had succeeded in instituting more colonial control of the fisheries, and he had made an attempt to develop an export trade directed from Quebec rather than Paris.

For personal and professional reasons, Bégon also channelled his energy into development of the forestry industry. By the summer of 1713, an export trade in masts had been established between the colony and the shipbuilding yards at Rochefort. Bégon argued that the trade made "use of available wood in the colony and gave work to the inhabitants, who

had little to do in the winter." Significantly, he secured orders for masts and shipbuilding products through his brother-in-law, François Beauharnois, intendant of Rochefort. Furthermore, Begon's close personal and business relationship with Claude de Ramezay, who operated a number of sawmills, meant that the intendant had a valuable connection in the colony. Moreover, Bégon himself had made investments in forest land and sawmills.[43] The stage, therefore, was set for the promotion of a profitable industry which would benefit Crown, colony and the intendant. However, Bégon's efforts were plagued by problems of ensuring transportation of the forest products on the king's ships and problems of finding labour to work in the woods. His frustration was evident when he wrote that he had prepared some of the "most beautiful boards of pine and oak cut to specification" from the Ramezay mills, but that late arrival of the king's flûtes meant that the cut wood was left to rot in the forest through the winter. What is more, he said, it was essential for the long ships, designed especially to carry masts, to arrive before the end of June so that the loading could proceed before the winds got high.[44] Despite these difficulties, Bégon remained determined to expand the industry.

In 1716, he reported to the Council that he had sent to Rochefort 100 barrels of tar produced from the northern pine forests. He confessed that he had acted without royal permission to do so, however, he explained that he had decided to take advantage of an opportunity to fill the empty spaces on a flûte leaving Quebec. The Marine accepted his decision, and, in fact, tar continued to be an integral part of the export trade in wood products. But the expedition of tar, like masts, was hampered by infrequent arrivals of the king's fleet. Loss of commercial orders and

stagnation of the trade ensued. Exasperated, the intendant wrote the Council to say that the market at Rochefort was good and if the whole enterprise were better organized from France, the colony would be able to send "une quantité considérable de bois."[45]

In another effort to develop the trade, Begon asked that a professional mast maker be sent to the colony. The Council approved the request and a man was sent the following year with the task of surveying the forests and reporting on the profitability of the industry.[46] Subsequently, an increased number of shipbuilding materials, masts, boards, planks, and tar were sent to Rochefort. Furthermore, confident that support for the timber industry would come from the Comte de Maurepas, Bégon presented a progress report in the autumn of 1725. In this brief he made several recommendations for increased production. In addition, he announced that he had made an investigation of prices, based on information sent to him by a merchant at Rochefort. The figures had convinced him that Rochefort offered an excellent market, and that there were potential markets for Canadian masts at Brest and Toulon.[47] However, to advance forestry production, he insisted that it would be essential for the Crown to send three flûtes annually, instead of one, which was now the practice. If approved, he argued, assuming that labour could be found, more efficient use could be made of the manpower employed in the forests. For example, men could be working at river's edge loading the ships, while others nearby produced tar. At the same time, others deep in the woods would be engaged in chopping trees and preparing them for transport to the river banks. There would be work enough to keep the men busy throughout the summer and the autumn. He declared that his ideas on re-organization of employment in the forestry

industry, and his ideas on the means for increased production had received endorsement in the colony. As a final note, the intendant proposed that with unlimited timber resources, efficient organization, and a ready supply of labour, production in wood products undoubtedly would increase the well-being of the colony.[48]

Finding labourers was a chronic problem for the colonial administrators of New France. Several measures were employed during the Bégon intendancy to increase the labour force--some with success. Most of the labour in the colony was supplied by the troops and the colonials. In addition, however, indentured labour and prisoners were sent out from France. Finally, some work was done according to the feudal custom of corvée. The king's work, such as the building of fortifications, government buildings, and roads, was provided by the troops. From time to time, corvée was invoked for specific tasks like the construction of the wall at Montreal. But the success of such a method was marginal, as the independently-minded colonials often tried to buy their way out of the obligation, or they sought measures which would alleviate their tasks.[49]

From the late seventeenth century labour shortage in the colony had been reduced, in part, by engagés or indentured workers. These men were hired in France, and they were given a three to five year term to work for the colonials at a reasonable wage. When their term was up they were granted lands of their own, or they were given freedom to return to France, which in fact, many of them did.[50] Another source of labour was the faux-sauniers, or those who had been imprisoned in France for evasion of the gabelle, or salt tax. Bégon, however, strongly objected to this practice, arguing that soldiers, released from duty, or engagés would serve the country better than those recognized as criminals.[51]

But the intendant's particular interest in combatting the labour shortage was to advocate the introduction of negro slaves into the colony. Likely influenced by his father's experience as intendant of Martinique, where the elder Bégon would have come to appreciate the value of negro labour, Bégon himself proposed that black workers be sent to Canada from the Antilles. He argued that they would not be used as slaves, but as workers, and that they would be given a wage and sustenance from their employers. Significantly, they could be an asset in agricultural production, as they could contribute to the seeding, cultivation, and harvest of the crops. In addition, there would be work for them in the forests as wood choppers and carriers, and they could also be used in the mines and the fishing industry. Moreover, he contended that these workers could be helpful in the colony as domestic labour--aiding those with young children, the aged, and the infirm. Most importantly, negro manpower could be used in the troops should a war break out. According to Bégon the essential work of the colony could be carried out by black labour, and he assured that as a result the colony would begin to flourish.[52]

However, the intendant's opinions on black labour were challenged by Vaudreuil. The governor argued that the negro would not adapt easily to the climate and that he would cost too much to feed and clothe. He maintained that the faux-sauniers would be a preferable source of colonial labour. However, Bégon countered these arguments by saying,

> Those who object to the negro coming, citing the cold climate as being contrary to their temperament, only have to look to the experiments of the English colonies and those of Manhattan to see that they fare well and, moreover, there are several here who are thriving.[53]

The French islands and the English colonies, particularly the Carolinas,

had prospered, he said, because of black labour: "These examples do not allow any doubt of the advantage that the colony could draw from having the services of the negro."[54] Nevertheless, despite Bégon's insistence, the Council was not moved to import a black labour force. After 1721, it would appear that the issue was closed. Yet labour shortages continued to torment the colonial administrators, particularly those who wished to further economic development in New France.

Although there was a persistent shortage of labour throughout Bégon's intendancy, the evidence marshalled here points to the beginning of commercial expansion. Diversification of domestic industry and an increase in the export trade led to a more vital economy in key areas of colonial production, such as in agriculture, fishing and forestry. From 1718 Bégon had registered an increase in the cultivation of wheat and other cereal crops. These grains, together with the annual harvests of peas and hemp, formed the base of an export trade to the West Indies and Île Royale. Encouragement of the livestock industry resulted in a rise in the number of meat-bearing animals, and in the establishment of a tannery on the St. Charles river. Bégon's experiments with the inland fisheries, especially those netting porpoise, increased oil production for export and colonial use. Moreover, extending fishing rights to the inhabitants, offered more local participation in the organization and profits of the fishing industry. By 1726, the potential of the Canadian forests had been recognized more clearly by the Marine. Export of masts, tar, and hemp to the shipyards at Rochefort offered the beginnings for further development. Development which would be manifest in a ship-building industry--a decade hence.

But the seeming success of economic growth during Bégon's tenure

must not overshadow some of the very real problems faced by the intendant and other colonial administrators. In an effort to launch wheat export and increased production, Bégon was met by charges of speculation and opportunism. Hemp cultivation proceeded only with firm moral and financial support from the Council. Conversely, the experiment in co-operative free enterprise along the banks of the St. Lawrence risked the failure of the porpoise fisheries. And the nascent forestry industry was stymied both by poor metropolitan organization and by the shortage of local labour.

However, despite these difficulties, there was a more stable economy in New France in 1726 than had existed in 1712. A confluence of factors, no doubt, was responsible. The period of relative peace between England and France offered an atmosphere conducive to French economic recovery. Moreover, the Regent's direction of the Council of Marine, according to John Law's determination to advance trade and commerce, was undoubtedly of consequence. Increased financial stability in the colony, with the resolution of the card money affair and regeneration of the fur trade, were contributing elements. Finally, the establishment of Louisbourg opened an important market for the products of Quebec.

Over all was the drive and enthusiasm for commercial development offered by Michel Bégon. Working within the context of French mercantilism, he recognized that there were opportunities for colonial initiative. Surely, his contribution is to be found in the impact which his thought and action had on imperial policy. Because of his work by the end of the first quarter of the eighteenth century, the Marine was more ready to accept colonial self-sufficiency, colonial industry, and a colonial export trade. Using his personal and professional relationships,

particularly those with the Comte de Maurepas, François Beauharnois, and Claude de Ramezay, he had mobilized support in the pursuance of these objectives. Ultimately, the colony under his leadership was the beneficiary.

CONCLUSION

Bilan

> C'est avec une grande joye, après un éloignement de France d'environ quatorze années et demi, que j'ay l'honneur de vous informer de mon retour sur "l'Eléphant" qui mouilla hier à onze heures du matin à la rade de l'Isle [d'Oléron] doit en trente-cinq jours de navigation, estant party de Québec le 18 du mois dernier. Elle a esté forte heureuse et quoy que la mer ait esté grosse ce qui est inévitable en cette saison, il ne nous est arrivé aucun contre-temps facheux. . . .
>
> Michel Bégon to Comte de Maurepas
> 23 November 1726[1]

"L'Eléphant," sailing vessel of Louis XV, carried Michel Bégon and his family to the shores of l'Isle d'Oléron. It was late autumn in 1726 and the Bégon family had arrived at the large island which marked entry to the port of Rochefort. Catching sight of the coastal town meant the conclusion for Bégon of a fourteen year tenure as intendant of New France.

The colonial post had offered Michel Bégon administrative advancement to the intendancy at Le Havre but, conclusively, little monetary gain. However, although the position had proved to be financially unrewarding, Bégon's service clearly had been of value to colony and Crown. New France in 1726 was on a firmer footing politically and economically than it had been in 1712. In spite of territorial losses in 1713, France had maintained her position in North America, and her relations with the Indian tribes had been stabilized. Card money was a relic of the past and gone were the distinctions of "money of France"

and "money of the country." Financial transactions now were being carried out on the basis of coin exchange. The fur trade which had been re-generated was directed by the Compagnie des Indes. More land was under cultivation and there had been an increase in the diversification of crops. New markets for colonial produce had opened up in the Antilles and at Louisbourg, and some incentive had been given to the forestry industry to produce masts, building materials, and tar for the metropolitan market.

Without doubt, a number of elements had contributed to the overall stability of the colony in 1726. Following Utrecht, the North American colonies had enjoyed a period of comparative peace. Moreover, the imperial government, under the leadership of the Duc d'Orléans, had moved France and subsequently the colony, toward financial recovery. Further, the Council of Marine, with able direction from the Duc d'Estrées and the Comte de Toulouse, had sought to order colonial management and to stimulate commercial development according to John Law's vision of revitalizing France through expansion of trade and empire.

However, throughout the period, countering the positive forces for economic recovery were the chronic problems of colonial administration. At base were the liabilities of eighteenth-century sea travel. From that stemmed the lack of regular communication with the royal government, financial dependence on shipments of royal funds, and commercial dependence on conveyance of trading goods. Moreover, emphasis on the drawing of staple commodities, notably fur and fish, for export to the Metropolis, assured that capital and labour were directed to these resources. This practice was at the expense of diversifying colonial industry and promoting self-sufficiency. Finally, economic achievement in New France

was dependent on the ability to compete with the English colonies for Indian trade and allegiance. Yet in spite of these odds, there was economic growth.

The contention of this thesis has been that the work of Michel Bégon was an important factor in the financial recovery and economic development of New France. It has been argued that in his direction of economic policy he went beyond the imperial guidelines and applied his own ideas and initiative to shape the Canadian economy. However, and undoubtedly, support for his activity came from his family ties to the royal administrative service and from his working relationships within the colony. Through his alliances with Ministers of Marine, Jérôme Pontchartrain and the Comte de Maurepas, he had personal as well as professional contacts at the heart of the French government. Moreover, his brother Scipion-Jérôme, Bishop of Toul, offered a not unbiased voice at the Royal Court. Further, with François and Charles Beauharnois, and Roland de la Galissonnière at Rochefort and La Rochelle, he had important family and official links in ports that were central to Canadian trade and commerce.

Within the colony, Bégon maintained an <u>équipe</u> of officials whose loyalty and steadfastness lent stability to the colonial administration. Men like Boucault, d'Aigremont, de Monseignat, Lanouiller de Boisclerc, and Chaussegros de Léry remained with him throughout his tenure. Bégon's relations with Governor Vaudreuil, although at times uncertain, were for the most part agreeable and bestowed an air of confidence on the administrative milieu. In addition, the intendant worked efficiently and compatibly with acting governors Claude de Ramezay and Charles LeMoyne Longueuil.

Broadly speaking, Bégon's direction of economic policy endorsed the Crown's commitment to maintain French political influence, to ensure sound Indian relations, and to hasten commercial development. More specifically, however, his contribution to the colony's economy can be measured by following his arguments for change in the economic policy established by the Ancien Régime.

Bégon, it would seem, thoroughly understood and was committed to retention of French influence in North America. To that end he and Vaudreuil argued for restoration of the congés and for an extension of the western trading posts which served as signposts of political influence. Through their joint effort, they re-established forts Michilimakinac, Detroit, Chicago, Chambly, and Niagara. Thereby, they strengthened the chain of French influence through the Great Lakes region. To further French control in the west in 1717 they sent an expedition to establish a fort at Kaministiqua, on the west shore of Lake Superior. The route followed was one described in precise detail by Michel Bégon the previous year. As important to Bégon as French presence in the western region, was a clarification of Gallic influence in the east. Following Utrecht, his was a solitary voice calling for confirmation of the Acadian boundary. Action not forthcoming, he stressed the importance of maintaining the loyalty of the Abénakis Indians and the Acadian French. He insisted that the Crown provide funding to maintain the missionary effort in Acadia, an activity which he believed was a significant component in holding the Acadians and the Abénakis within the French sphere of influence.

Recognition of the Indian, as an important trading and military asset to colonial life, was a consistent theme in Michel Bégon's writing. He argued fervently in favour of Abénakis-Franco relations throughout

his tenure. Although the Iroquois had formally been made citizens of the British in 1713, Bégon clearly acknowledged that the Indians themselves were undecided in their commitment. Therefore, he continually pressed for funding to provide both presents and interpreters to uphold their allegiance to the French. Further, he also demanded that boats which could be used on the Great Lakes, be built in an effort to impress the Iroquois. These boats, he suggested, could be used to carry provisions to the posts but more importantly, could also be used to carry Indian allies in the event of an Iroquois war.

The Indians knew the fur trade, he admonished, and knew it well. In his mémoires on the beaver and fabric trades, he argued that for the French to remain competitive with the English colonies that it was imperative that the Crown give the Indian a better market. He insisted that the price of beaver be raised and that a better quality of woollen fabric be manufactured in France or purchased in England to offset the competition from Orange. Accordingly, Bégon's arguments register his esteem for the Indian's trading skill and his perception of the need for Indian co-operation.

The intendant's appreciation of the Indian, as a central figure in the economic development of New France, was matched by his understanding and, perhaps, envy of English administration and trade activity. More than once, he cited the English example as a means of furthering commerce in the colony. He argued that the English had realized the value of establishing colonial industries, such as iron forges, to provide for domestic needs. He urged the Council to recognize and duplicate the superior quality of English trade goods. He proposed freeing the fur trade in the west from monopoly control so that French traders would

have access to an open market. In response to the chronic shortage of labour in the colony, he argued for the importation of black workers from the Antilles. The English colonies, he asserted, had thrived on the basis of their black labour force.

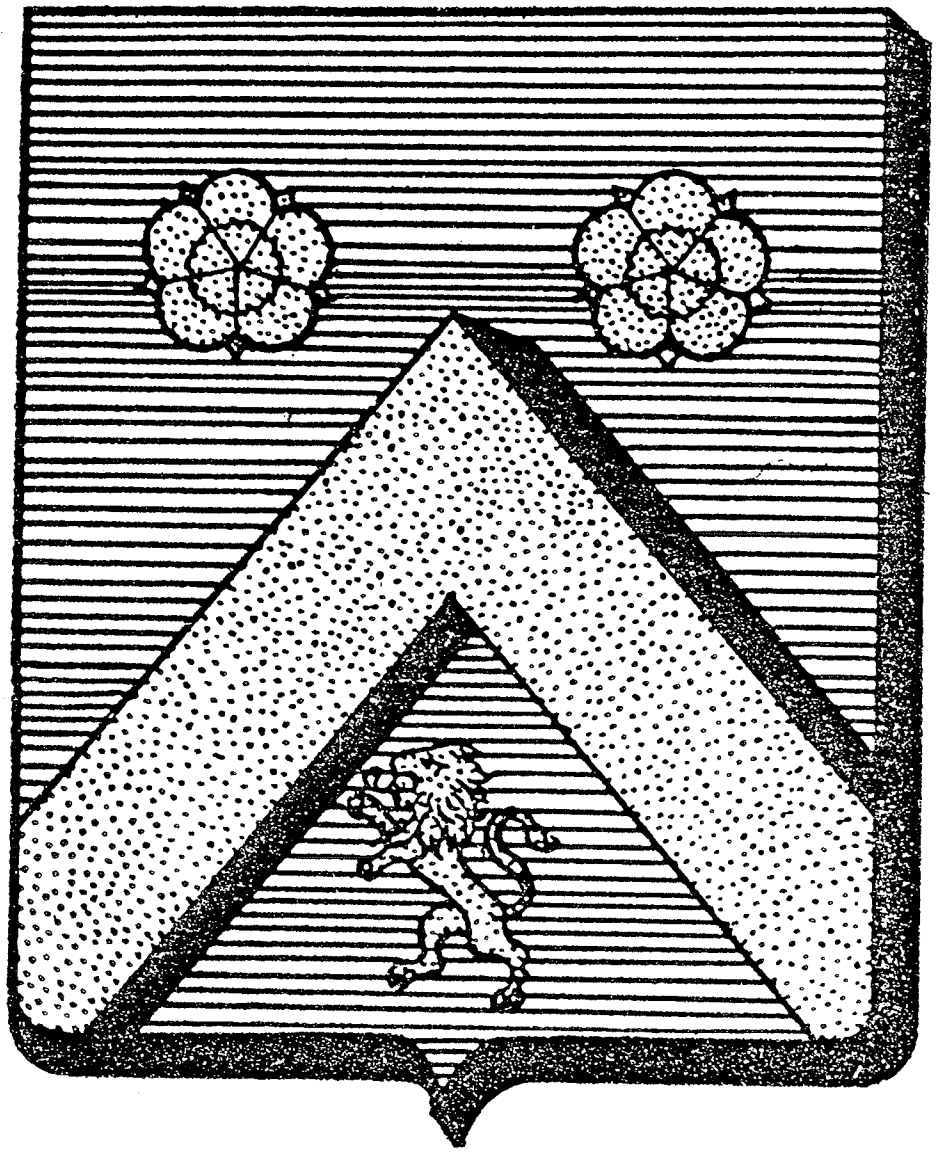
Bégon's natural enthusiasm for commercial activity and trade provided the drive for increased agricultural production of wheat, peas, and particularly hemp. His determination to establish an export market resulted in more trade with the Antilles and with the military garrison at Louisbourg. Stimulation of the livestock industry led to Bégon re-opening the tannery established by Jean Talon. Experiments with the inland fisheries, if not financially successful, through Bégon's initiative, offered a base in future years for more colonial involvement in their management and development. Finally, the intendant's interest in generating the forestry industry led to the export of masts, building materials, and tar despite problems of imperial disorganization and shortage of labour.

From 1712 to 1726, Michel Bégon directed the economy of French Canada according to the precepts established by the imperial regime. However, the bilan would suggest that into Crown policy he injected his own enthusiasm for commercial development and his own determination to increase colonial self-sufficiency and independence. His work underscored the importance of Indian relations to trade and to the security of New France. He argued that the French would gain by following the English example in colonial management and commercial practices. He proposed free trade principles, as a means of reviving the fur trade. And he firmly endorsed the diversification of colonial industries and the development of a colonial export trade. In the final analysis,

Michel Bégon's contribution to the direction of economic policy in French Canada was to lay the foundation for further growth and development in the colony resting on the banks of the St. Lawrence.

BEGON

APPENDIX 1



Coat of Arms of the Bégon family, Blois, France
from E. Z. Massicotte & R. Roy. Armorial du Canada Français
(Montréal, 1915), 64. (credit P.A.C. - C19105)

APPENDIX 2

FUNDING FOR THE COLONY OF NEW FRANCE FROM 1712 TO 1726*

	budget	l'état du roi	l'état du domaine	total	expenses	deficit/surplus
1712		463.188	57.964	520.152	567.348	47.196/
1713	448.373	391.188	51.160	442.348	445.455	3.107/
1714		375.372	109.339	484.711	556.179	71.468/
1715		414.298	133.948	548.246	548.243	/ .003
1716		318.292	184.375	502.667	502.672	.005/
1717	350.545	322.522	260.757	583.279	583.125	/ .154
1718	284.990	281.763	92.411	317.174	374.198	.024/
1719	292.465	285.107	145.697	430.804	430.804	____
1720		295.206	86.293	381.499	381.499	____
1721	300.325	309.543	96.857	406.400	577.932	171.532/
1722	299.433	314.114	91.332	405.446	406.158	.712/
1723	309.243	318.403	93.677	412.080	412.092	.012/
1724	294.817	291.341	92.335	383.676	383.676	____
1725	294.550	289.696	103.881	393.577	393.594	.017/
1726	332.786	289.494	107.293	396.787	398.150	1.363/

Note: All figures are rounded off to livres.

From 1716, the reports are more detailed which likely reflects the Council's insistence on keeping careful records.

The largest grant of l'état du roi was in 1712 and the smallest was in 1718. This again may reflect more careful accounting by the Council.

The colonial revenue doubled in 1714 and 1715. By 1716, it had tripled and in 1717 it was five times that of 1712. After 1719 it stabilized. These differences may be accounted for by the production of card money. There is not another clear explanation other than bookkeeping practice. Note the stabilizing effect of l'état du domaine to balance the budget.

*AC, F1A, vol. 18:76-121, vol. 19:28-219, vol. 20:29-37, vol. 21: 88-277, vol. 22:19-204, vol. 23:70-227, vol. 24:24-84, vol. 25:48.

APPENDIX 3

A BREAKDOWN OF MICHEL BÉGON'S BUDGET OF 16 OCTOBER 1717 IN RELATION TO THE ROYAL FUNDS WHICH WERE GRANTED 25 JUNE 1718.*

	Colonial Expenses	Budget	%	Funds Granted	Difference
1	Rental of houses and shops in Quebec, Montreal and Trois Rivières	2,147	.75	2,000	.147
2	Construction, repair and maintenance of boats, canoes, and brigantines	5,110	1.7	5,110	
3	Day labourers and works at Quebec and Montreal	4,800	1.6	4,800	
4	Purchase of food stores-for troops	9,200		20,000	+10,800
5	Munitions	10,800	17.4	20,000	+ 9,200
6	Other merchandise	24,780		1,500	-23,280
7	Freight and carrying charges	5,000		4,000	- 1,000
8	Hospitals for troops	3,000	1	2,500	- 500
9	Wages and salaries for employees of the king's stores	11,401	4	11,401	
10	Voyages and journeys	3,000	1	3,000	
11	Unknown expenses	3,000	1	3,000	
12	Salaries and equipment for the troops	149,634	52.5	149,634	
13	Salaries of colonial officials	47,518	16.6	47,518	

* AC, F1A, vol. 20:29-37. All figures are in livres.

Appendix 3 cont'd

Colonial Expenses	Budget	%	Funds Granted	Difference
14 Ordinary bonuses	3,600	1.2	3,600	
15 Presents to Abénakis Indians	2,000	.7	2,000	
16 Entry for re-establishment of the Intendant's Palace at Quebec stroked out				
17 Construction of church for the Indians of Medoctch and Naurantsouak			1,200	+ 1,200
18 Construction of fort and mission at St. Louis			1,000	+ 1,000
Total	284,990		281,763	- 3,227

APPENDIX 4

RECAPITULATION OF BÉGON'S BUDGET--PREPARED 16 OCTOBER 1717*

			Total	%
Rental of houses, offices and shops	Quebec	510.		
	Trois-Rivières	262.10	2,147.10	.75
	Montreal	1,375.		
Construction, repairs and purchase of boats			5,110.	1.7
Day workers	Quebec	2,400.		
	Montreal	2,400.	4,800.	
Purchase of merchandise	food	9,200.		
	munitions	10,800.		
	diverse	24,780.	49,780.	17.4
	freight and carriage	5,000.		
Hospitals			3,000.	1
Salaries of Crown employees	Quebec	4,380.		
	Trois-Rivières	322.	11,401.	4
	Montreal	6,699		
Travel			3,000.	1
Diverse Expenses			3,000.	
	Total		82,238.10	
Salaries and equipment for the troops			149,634.	52.5
Salaries of colonial officials			47,518.	16.6
Ordinary bonuses			3,600.	1.2
Presents for the Abénakis			2,000.	.7
	Total		284,990.10 livres	

*AC, F1A, vol. 20:29-37.

APPENDIX 5

Playing Card Money used in New France in 1714.
Artist unknown--attributed to H. Beau (credit P.A.C., C-17059).

APPENDIX 6

Map of the western fur trading posts.
By 1726
A chain of French political influence in the Great Lakes region.

ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THE NOTES

AC	Archives des Colonies
AHR	American Historical Review
BN	Bibliothèque Nationale
BRH	Bulletin des Recherches Historiques
CDB	Canadian Dictionary of Biography
CHA	Canadian Historical Association
CHR	Canadian Historical Review
CJH	Canadian Journal of History
FHS	French Historical Studies
PAC	Public Archives of Canada
RAPQ	Rapport de l'Archiviste de la Province de Québec
RHAF	Revue d'Histoire de l'Amérique Française
RH	Revue Historique

Notes to the Introduction

1. Complément des Ordonnances et Jugements (1856), vol. 3, 63.

2. One arpent is equivalent to 34.19 acres on 13.6 hectares.

3. Gilles Hocquart was seventeen years in the post of intendant from 1731 to 1748.

4. T. Chapais, Jean Talon, Intendant de la Nouvelle-France, 1665-1672 (Québec, 1904), R. Lamontagne, (1964), Succès d'Intendance de Talon (Montréal, 1964), Jean-Claude Dubé, Claude-Thomas Dupuy, Intendant de la Nouvelle-France 1678-1738 (Montréal, 1969), D. J. Horton, "Gilles Hocquart, Intendant of New France, 1729-1748" (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, McGill, 1974), Guy Frégault, François Bigot (Montréal, 1948).

5. R. Mousnier, Etat et société en France aux XVII^e et XVIII^e siècles. Le gouvernement et le corps (Paris), R. Mousnier et E. Labrousse, Le XVIII^e siècle (Paris, 1963), R. Mandrou, La France aux XVII^e et XVIII^e siècles (Paris, 1970), Louis XIV en son temps 1661-1715 (Paris, 1973), G. Frégault, Le XVIII^e siècle Canadien: Etudes (Montréal, 1968), La civilisation de la la Nouvelle-France (Ottawa, 1969-reprint 1944), W. J. Eccles, The Canadian Frontier, 1534-1760 (Toronto, 1969), France in America (N.Y., 1970).

6. Robert La Roque de Roquebrun, "La direction de la Nouvelle-France par le ministère de la marine," R.H.A.F. (1952-53), 470-488, A. Vachon, "The Administration of New France," D.C.B., 11 (1969), xv-xxv.

7. Y. Bézard, Fonctionnaires maritimes et coloniaux sous Louis XIV. Les Bégon (Paris, 1932), V. R. Gruder, The Royal Provincial Intendants. A Governing Elite in Eighteenth-Century France (N.Y., 1968), J.-C. Dubé, Dupuy, "Origine sociale des intendants de la Nouvelle-France," Histoire Sociale, 11 (novembre 1968), 18-33, "Les intendants de la Nouvelle-France et la république des lettres," R.H.A.F., 29 (juin, 1975), 31-48, "Clients des Colbert et des Pontchartrain à l'intendance de Québec," Hommage à Roland Mousnier: Clientèles et fidélités en Europe à l'époque moderne (Paris, 1981), Y. Zoltvany, "Philippe de Rigaud Vaudreuil: Governor of New France," 1703-1725 (Toronto, 1974), M. Filion, Maurepas, ministre de Louis XV, 1715-1949 (Montréal, 1967), Maurepas: vis à vis du Canada 1723-1749 (Ottawa, 1972).

8. E. Labrousse, Esquisse du mouvement des prix et des revenus en France au XVIII^e siècle (Paris, 1933), F. Braudel, Histoire économique et sociale de la France, 1600-1789 (Paris, 1970), A. J. Lunn, "Economic development in New France, 1713-1760" (unpublished Ph.D. thesis McGill, 1942), J. Hamelin, Economie et société en Nouvelle-France (Montréal, 1960), P. Harvey, "Stagnation économique en Nouvelle-France," l'Actualité économique, 37 (octobre-décembre, 1961), 537-548, J. Pritchard, "Commerce in New France," Canadian Business, History, selected studies 1497-1971, ed. D. S. MacMillan (Toronto,

1972), 27-43, J. Bosher, "Government and Private Interests in New France," Canadian History Before Confederation, ed. J. M. Bumsted (Georgetown, Ont., 1979), 104-117, and L. Dechêne, Habitants et Marchands de Montréal au XVII^{e} siècle (Paris, 1974).

9. When the correspondence is signed by both Governor Vaudreuil and Bégon, ideas pertaining to economic matters have been attributed to Bégon; however, every effort has been made to confirm these with Bégon memoir material. Note: All French references have been translated by the author for the text, but remain in the original in the footnotes. Where the documents were in eighteenth-century French, the form has been maintained.

Notes to Chapter One

1. Frégault, La Civilisation, 14.

2. Bégon to Pontchartrain, 12 November 1712, AC, C11A, 33:119.

3. Vaudreuil to Pontchartrain, 15 October 1712, R.A.P.Q. (1947-48), 160.

4. See D. J. Horton, "Raudot, Antoine-Denis," C.D.B., 11, 549-554, "Raudot, Jacques," C.D.B., 11, 554-560, "Hocquart, Gilles," C.D.B., IV, 354-365 for similarities in the formation of these intendants.

5. Shortt, Documents, 1, 235.

6. Horton, "Raudot, Jacques," 554-560.

7. G. Frégault, "Politique et politiciens," Canadien: Etudes, 230.

8. B. N., Dossiers bleus, 79. Also Y. Bézard, Les Bégon, 175-176, 261-269. Bézard points out that Magistrate Bégon (Bégon's father) had a renowned collection of paintings by the old masters, an extensive stamp collection (now housed at the Bibliothèque Nationale) and a naturalist collection with many exhibits gathered from seventeenth-century Canada including a birch bark canoe with paddles, beavers' teeth, a white partridge and lobster claws. Bégon's patronage of Père Plumier and botanist Surian led to the naming of an American plant, bégonia, in honour of their intendant at Rochefort. Bézard says, "Nous pouvons retrouver une image du cabinet chez à Bégon dans ces musées ethnographiques de province où la poussière tombe sur un étrange bric-à-brac de cailloux, de tomawaks et de jupes et plumes." Bégon to Scipion-Jérôme, 30 November 1718, Fonds Bégon, P54/2K, 21. Bégon says that he had made arrangements to have 150 barrels of wine sent out to Canada from the family vineyards at Blois. See also Bégon to Maurepas, 31 October 1725, AC, C11A, 47:253. Bégon wrote that he had sent by merchant ship several animals and birds to be delivered to François Beauharnois, intendant at Rochefort. Bégon noted that he had kept back four deer, "les ports (sic) de ces navires étants trop bas." And, AC, C11A, 46:242 and AC, C11B, 49: 675.

9. Y. Zoltvany, "Michel Bégon," D.C.B., III, 67.

10. Arthur Vallée, Un biologiste Canadien Michel Sarrazin 1659-1735 (Québec, 1927), 234. For another indication of Bégon's compassion and kindness see "Le Bénédictin Dom Georges-François Poulet dans La Nouvelle-France" R.A.P.Q. (1922-23), 275. The story is told that the Benedictine came to Canada in 1714 and lived for three years without habit when his cabin near Kamouraska burned and forced him to leave and go to Quebec where he risked discovery and imprisonment but ". . . on ne voulût pas le souffrir d'avantage sans son habit, M. Bégon, l'intendant lui en fit faire un drap noir, à peu savait au juste comment il le fallait, il était fort éloigné de la manière dont les Bénédictins sont vêtus. Il le porta cependant et trouva moyen d'éluder, en 1717, son embarquement."

11. See Chapter Five, pp. 107-110.

12. Shortt, Documents, 621 ft. Nicolas-Gaspard Boucault (d. 1760). Boucault was Bégon's secretary from 1712 to 1726. In 1721, he worked with Attorney-General Collet on the seigneurial survey being conducted by Bégon.
Shortt, Documents, 93 ft. Charles de Monseignat (d.1718). de Monseignat acted as secretary to Frontenac in his second term. He was appointed Controller of the Marine in 1701. From 1709 to 1712 he was manager of the Domaine.
Shortt, Documents, 258, 259 ft. François Clairambault d'Aigremont (d. 1729), was first appointed commissary of the marine in New France in 1701. From 1710 to 1712, he was commissioned by Bégon to act as Controller of the Marine. From 1712 to 1714 he served as agent of the Treasurer General at Montreal.
Shortt, Documents, 357 ft. Nicolas Lanouiller de Boisclerc (1679-1756). Lanouiller was a barrister of Parlement de Paris. He arrived in Quebec in 1712 as the agent of Aubert, Néret, and Gayot. In 1719, he was appointed Controller of the Marine; in 1720, agent of the Treasurer General of Marine at Quebec. He later served under Hocquart.
Shortt, Documents, 674 ft. Gaspard Joseph de Chaussegros de Léry (d. 1756). He was sent to Canada in 1716 as architectural engineer to supervise the fortification works. He was associated with the work at Quebec, Montreal, Niagara and Chambly. For an interesting investigation of Chaussegros de Léry's work see A. Charbonneau, Y. Desloges, M. Lafrance, Québec, The Fortified City: From the 17th to the 19th Century (Ottawa, 1982).

13. F. H. Hammang, The Marquis de Vaudreuil - New France at the Beginning of the Eighteenth-Century (Bruges, 1938), 76, Frégault, "Politique et politiciens," 197. Frégault says, "Il faudra attendre l'année 1712 avant d'assister à la formation d'une équipe stable avec Vaudreuil et Bégon." Biographical note: Philippe Rigaud de Vaudreuil (1643-1725) came to Canada in 1687; from 1699 to 1703 he was governor of Montreal, then from 1703 to his death in 1725 he was governor-general of Canada. His wife Mme. Vaudreuil took up residence in the French Court in 1709, in 1712 she was appointed governess to the Duc de Berry (third son of the Grand Dauphin). She returned to

Canada in 1721, but departed again for France in 1723. Vaudreuil's son, Pierre Rigaud de Vaudreuil, served as governor of Louisiana from 1744 to 1753 and as governor of Canada from 1755 to 1760. At Vaudreuil's death in 1725 he was replaced by acting governor Charles LeMoyne Longueuil until1726. See also Zoltvany, Vaudreuil, 100, 110, 189.

14. Charles-André Julien, Les Français en Amérique de 1713 à 1784 (Paris, 1977), 202. Julien says, ". . . après l'incendie de l'intendance [Bégon] perdit 50,0001 (some say 40,0001)." In addition to the financial losses which Bégon incurred while in Canada, he had debts in France. See Fonds Bégon, P54/2K, 27 and P54/2K, 29.

15. Vaudreuil to Pontchartrain, May 1713, AC, C11A, 34:37. B. N. pièces originales, 264, 298, Dossiers bleus, 79: Cabinet d'Hozier, 36.

16. Bézard, 261-269. Bégon's uncle Scipion was a doctor of theology at the Sorbonne; his brother Scipion-Jérôme (1681-1753) also became a doctor of theology at the Sorbonne, and comte and bishop of Toul, 1721-1753. Bézard says, "Sous sa direction, le grand séminaire de Toul devint l'un des plus importants de France. . . . "Claude-Michel (1683-1748) married Elisabeth Rocbert 16 November 1718 in Canada. See also J.-C. Dubé, "Origine sociale des intendants de la Nouvelle-France," and "Les intendants de la Nouvelle-France et la République des lettres." Dubé notes that the "most remarkable milieu" of the Canadian intendants was that of the Bégon family. And see D. J. Horton, "Bégon, Claude-Michel," C.D.B., 111, 56.

17. B. N. Pièces-originales, 242. Shortt, 116, 294. François Beauharnois (1665-1746). As intendant at Rochefort he was in charge of colonial shipping, equipment, provisions and supplies. Shortt, 563, 564, and S. D. Standen, "Beauharnois, Charles Marquis de," C.D.B., 111, 41-50. Charles Beauharnois (1671-1749).

18. Bégon to Scipion-Jérôme, 13 October 1719, Fonds Bégon, P54/2K, 23. Bégon reported, "Mme. Bégon . . . est encore faible de ses couches. . . ." Jeanne-Elisabeth (1715-1738) m. François Longeril in 1737, one child: Michel (1717-1795) m. Anne-Françoise de Pernot (d. 1745) one son (1745-1747): Marie-Madeleine (1718-): Catherine (1719-1762) m. François Lafon de la Duye, three children.

19. Dubé, Dupuy, 80. Dubé notes the similarity in career patterns between Bégon and other intendants who served in the Canadian administration, i.e., François Beauharnois, the Raudot. See also V. Gruder, The Royal Provincial Intendants, and R. Mousnier La France aux XVII^{e} et XVIII^{e} siècles.

20. Dubé, "République des lettres," 38. Dubé speculates that Bégon may have been enrolled at Louis le Grand in Paris for his prep schooling.

21. Bézard, 261-269. See also Horton, "Hocquart," 354. Horton points out that in the eighteenth century Rochefort was a training school for marine personnel.

22. Bézard, 101.

23. Ibid., 104.

24. Ibid., 262.

25. Louis Delavaud et Ch. Dangebeaud, Lettres de Michel Bégon, III (Paris, 1935), 43-44.

26. Maurice Filion, Maurepas, ministre de Louis XIV, 27, 30. Jean-Frédéric Phélypeaux, Comte de Maurepas (1701-1781) was the eldest son of Jérôme Phélypeaux, Comte de Pontchartrain and Eléanore de la Rochefoucauld de Raye. The family originated in Blois in the fifteenth century. In a 150 year period, the family supplied nine secretaries of state to the Crown. Maurepas was Secretary of State and Minister of Marine from 1723 to 1749 and Secretary of State and Councillor to Louis XV, from 1774 to 1781. See also Maurepas, vis à vis Canada, 420-422. Filion argues that Maurepas' work for the colonies reached unsuspected dimensions. He ranks him with Richilieu and Colbert for influencing colonial development. Although Bégon was nominated for the post at Le Havre in 1724, he was unable to leave until 1726 because his successors Srs. Chazel and Robert both died before reaching the Canadian post.

27. Dubé, "République des lettres," 46, 47. Dubé notes that the inventory of Bégon's library showed some books on theology, fewer on law than expected, a copy of Bayle and several issues of "Mercure Gallant."

28. Henri Blet, La Colonisation Française. Des Origines à 1789 (Grenoble, 1946), 196; Cole, Colbert and a Century of French Mercantilism (New York, 1939).

29. Jean-Claude Dubé, "Clients de Colbert et de Pontchartrain," 34.

30. Hammang, Vaudreuil, 18-19.

31. Alfred Cobban, A History of Modern France, 1715-1799 (Middlesex, 1963), 18-19. Cobban suggests that d'Orléans' reputation was so bad that he was suspected of poisoning his way to the throne, however, without evidence. But, Cobban points out that in spite of his personal character his early years as Regent were directed to reform of the system of Louis XIV. With his minister Abbé Dubois and the British foreign minister, Lord Stanhope, he worked out an alliance with Britain in 1716 which, with the addition of the Dutch in 1717, became the Triple Alliance. The alliance created a climate of peace conducive to financial recovery and economic development.

32. Shortt, 307.

33. Cobban, 22. Shortt, 335 ft., the Comte de Toulouse, Louis Alexandre de Bourbon, was the third son of Louis XIV and Mme de Montespan.

34. Marcel Giraud, Histoire de la Louisiane. Années de Transition 1715-1716 (Paris, 1958), II, 7.

35. Robert La Roque de Roquebrun, "La direction de la Nouvelle-France," 470-488. It is particularly useful to understand the role of the premiers commis; however, it is extremely difficult to determine how much correspondence is in their hand when it is signed by the minister. It would be necessary to become familiar with the handwriting styles and personal marks to accurately assess their influence. Therefore, in this work the assumption is that Bégon was in correspondence with the Minister or Council, but recognizing that some of his letters may have been answered by the commis.

36. The Conseil Supérieur was the Conseil Souverain until 1703 when the title was changed. The body was created in 1663 with a membership of governor, intendant (president), vicar-apostolic and five councillors. In Bégon's period its main function was to act as a court of appeal.

37. André Vachon, "The Administration of New France," xv-xxvi.

38. Ibid., xx. Also see G. Frégault, La Civilisation, 111. Frégault remarks, "En somme, [intendant] il est à la tête de toute l'administration intérieure. Plus que tout autre, il se tient perpétuellement en contact avec les réalités de la vie quotidienne. Ses attributions formeraient aujourd'hui celle de plusieurs ministères, comme celui des Finances, celui de la Justice, de l'Intérieur, du Commerce, de l'Agriculture. . . . "

39. La Roque de Roquebrun, 470-488.

40. Vachon, xv-xxvi.

41. Ordonnances des Intendants du Canada, 286, 29 February 1716. Bégon posted this notice on the front of all churches: "Nous faisons défense à toutes personnes, tout ceux qui monteront leurs chevaux, de les faire trotter ou galoper quand les gens sortiront de l'église avant d'en être éloignés de dix arpents, ensuite pourront donner à leur chevaux le train qu'ils voudront, lorsqu'il n'y aura personne devant eux. . . . "

42. Vachon, xv-xxv. Also see Roland Lamontagne, l'Administration au Canada (Montréal, 1965), 29-35, and W. J. Eccles, Canada Under Louis XIV, 1663-1701 (Toronto, 1964), and M. A. Johnston, "The King's Domain: The Domain of the West in New France 1675-1733" (unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Western Ontario, 1961). In 1674 Colbert liquidated the Compagnie de l'Occident, the fur trade company holding the monopoly of the Canadian fur trade. With the liquidation he farmed out the right to collect all duties and taxes in the West Indies and Canada to a syndicate, the Domaine d'Occident or the Domain of the West, or the Company of the Farm. The lease for tax collection was to cost 350,000 livres per year. The fur trade was then immediately sub-leased to Aubert de la Chesnaye for 119,000 livres.

Notes to Chapter Two

1. Bégon to Scipion-Jérôme, 29 October 1921, Fonds Bégon, P54/2K,29.

2. Marcel Marion, Histoire Financière de la France Depuis 1715 (New York, 1964), vol. 1, 62, 63. Marion says that in 1715 the Duc de Noailles, President of Finance for the Council of Finance often talked about "le chaos." The national debt was 1.2 million livres. Further, Marion states that in 1715, "Le peuple était désolé, le paysan mal nourri et mal habillé. . . . La noblesse ruinée par les taxes et par les dépenses de la guerre, ne tiront presque rien du roi en pensions ni en appointements. . . . Les gens de robe, sans paiement de leurs gages, étaient aussi accablis de dettes."

3. See Pierre Harvey, "Stagnation économique en Nouvelle-France," l'Actualité économique, 37 (Oct.-Dec., 1961), 541 where he argues that a shortage of money for circulation was a common problem in the American (English) colonies, as in New France. Also, Curtis Nettles, The Money Supply of the American Colonies Before 1720 (Clifton, N.J., 1964). Nettles points out that the American colonies were under similar mercantilist principles of financial dependence as were the French territories.

4. Eccles, France, 104.

5. Shortt, Documents, vol. 1, li. See also Eccles, Frontier, x. Note: re. coinage. Livres, sols, deniers were the standard means of exchange. A livre tournois = 12 sols; one sol = 20 deniers; one liard = 6 deniers; a gold écu = 7 livres 12 sols; silver écu = 4 livres. Playing card money would appear to be an innovation unique to New France.

6. Shortt, Documents, 191, 197. The fur trading syndicate, as the French government, was known to default on payment of the bills of exchange.

7. Bosher, "Government and private interests," 113.

8. Ibid., 111, 112, and James Pritchard, "Commerce in New France," 27-43. Also see Zoltvany, "Michel Bégon," 65. Zoltvany points out that the intendant could become victim of a system which put all funds into the hands of an agent for the Treasurer General. In principle, the funds were not released without the signature of the intendant, in practice, it was difficult to monitor what the agent did with the funds.

9. Council to Vaudreuil and Bégon, 6 July 1718, AC, C11B, 40:496. The salaries of Vaudreuil and Bégon were to be paid in France, in two installments given to Mme. Vaudreuil, resident at the Court, and to Abbé Bégon, Bégon's brother. And, Vaudreuil and Bégon to Council, 10 November 1718, AC, C11A, 39:48. They ask if their salaries could be paid in "money of France" for the full year and not in installments - "en considération des dépens . . . qu'ils

font pour les provisions qu'ils sont obligés de faire venir de france tous les ans." And, Bégon to Scipion-Jérôme, 30 October 1718, Fonds Bégon, P54/2K,21. Bégon wrote to Abbé Bégon to ask him to intervene in the Council's decision so that he could gain his salary in "money of France" and in one payment. He said if this were done "mes affaires de france s'arrangeront encore mieux que celles icy ainsi je commence à me tranquiliser après bien des inquiétudes."

10. Guy Frégault, "Essai sur les finances canadiennes," Le XVIIIe siècle Canadien:Etudes (Montréal, 1968), 295. The dîme in New France could be between 1/3 to 1/26%. And Julien, Les Français, 204. Also, Johnston, "The Domain of the West," iii. The Domaine supported some of the king's charges such as the salaries of the four senior military officials in the colony. Some money also went to the religious orders, and for pensions and gifts to widows. There was also some money, a "slush fund", for the intendant's use.

11. Shortt, Documents, 223-229. The magasins du roi sold wine, spirits, tobacco, powder, shot, arms, cloth, blankets, and presents for the Indians. The shopkeepers were accountable to the intendant. See also W. J. Eccles, "The Social, Economic and Political Significance of the Military Establishment in New France," Society and Conquest, ed. D. Miquelon (Toronto, 1977), 115. An example of the range of goods dispensed by the magasins du roi can be found in this 1716 mémoire sent by Bégon and Sr. Foucault (garde de magasin - and relative of the Beauharnois family). Sales from the magasins du roi were not only to the colonists but were also to ships' captains to outfit the king's ships before the return journey to France - Bégon and Foucault to Council, 26 October 1716, AC, F1A, vol. 22. They reported the sale of 25 planks, 1000 nails à Bordeaux, 500 nails à boette, 145 livres of iron, 70 sheets of iron, 300 sheets of white iron, 96 squares of glass for "rafraîchissement," 1835 livres of beef, 15 livres of mutton, 11 cords of wood for heating, 46 livres of sugar, 10 dozen eggs, 4,456 livres of "pain bis," 123 livres of "pain blanc," 10 quintals (100 lbs) of hay, 81 livres "fleur de farine," 7 minots (39 litres) of wheat, and 6 minots of Indian wheat.

12. Frégault, "Essai," 295-302.

13. Bégon mémoire, 12 November 1712, AC, C11A, 33:127 and Vaudreuil and Bégon to Pontchartrain, 12 November 1712, AC, C11A, 33:25. Duplessis had been ill for many months and as a result his accounts were in disorder. He died 31 October 1714.

14. Bégon mémoire, 12 November 1712, AC, C11A, 33:129.

15. Ibid. Also Yves Zoltvany, "The Frontier Policy of Philippe de Rigaud, de Vaudreuil, 1713-1725," C.H.R., xlviii (1967), 231 and Vaudreuil, 201. Bégon's ideas generally supported Vaudreuil's Indian policy, however, by the 1720's Vaudreuil was prepared to sacrifice relations with the Abénakis and not support them in their war with the English, in the name of French security.

16. Bégon mémoire, 19 November 1715, AC, C11A, 35:117. Documents Relatifs à la Nouvelle-France, 18. The Council granted Vaudreuil and Bégon funds in 1718 to build two churches for the Abénakis at Naransouak and Medoctch.

17. Ibid. Bégon mémoire, 19 November 1715, AC, C11A, 35:117.

18. Ibid., 115-117. Also Bégon mémoire, 9 October 1716, AC, C11A, 36:154. Bégon emphasized the importance of giving the Abénakis a good market to counter trade with the English.

19. Ibid. Bégon mémoire, 19 November 1715, AC, C11A, 35:113.

20, Ibid., 125v.

21. Ibid.

22. Ibid., 127. Queen Anne of England died in 1714. She was succeeded by George I.

23. Ibid., 122v. And Bégon mémoire, 8 November 1718, AC, C11A, 39:176. As early as 1713, Bégon called for a clear definition of the Acadian boundaries. See Zoltvany, Vaudreuil, 131. Article 12 of the Treaty of Utrecht stated that Acadia was ceded to the English with the "ancient boundaries" but it was not clear what they were. The Commission did not meet until 1720 to finally determine the limits. Says Zoltvany, "Michel Bégon . . . stated the problem clearly as of November (1714)." Because of the confusion many thought that France had ceded not only Acadia, but also the areas now known as Maine, New Brunswick, and the Gaspe. Also Documents Relatifs à la Nouvelle France, "Mémoire on the limits of Acadia sent to the Regent by Père F.-X. Charlevoix. "Charlevoix noted that from the time of Bégon's arrival in the colony that he had pressed for rules concerning the boundaries of Acadia. Bégon judged them to be important, Charlevoix said, because he feared that a thoughtless act on the part of the Abénakis could provoke a war with the English, which would mean war with the French, as the French had committed themselves to defend the Abénakis. In spite of Bégon's efforts, by 1722 the English and the Abénakis were at war. Father Rasle of the mission at Naransouak was killed by English soldiers. Peace was restored circa 1727. See also Archives du Ministère des Affaires Étrangères, BI:360.

24. Beauharnois and Dupuy to Maurepas, 2 October 1726, AC, C11A, 48:36.

25. Bégon's work in these areas will be discussed in more detail in succeeding chapters. However, a good study of the fortification works is Charbonneau et al., Québec: The Fortified City.

26. "Mémoire of works on the palace 1715-1716," 5 November 1715, AC, C11A, 35:199.

27. Bégon to Pontchartrain, no date, Fonds Bégon, P54/2K,4. And Bégon and Longueuil to Maurepas, 31 October 1725, AC, C11A, 47:252.

Also, D. J. Horton, "Claude-Michel Bégon de la Cour," C.D.B., vol. III, 59-60.

28. Roy, Inventaire des Ordonnances, 194. Bégon to Pontchartrain, 12 November 1714, AC, C11A, 34. And Vaudreuil and Bégon to Council, November 1718, AC, C11A, 39:24. Vaudreuil and Bégon asked for a bonus for Michel Sarrazin, king's surgeon, "en considération des recherches curieuses."

29. Vaudreuil and Bégon to Pontchartrain, 1714, AC, C11A, 34:247.

30. Vaudreuil and Bégon to Council, 26 October 1720, AC, C11A, 42:54v.

31. Vaudreuil and Bégon to Council, 14 October 1723, AC, C11A, 45:233.

32. Council to Bégon, 6 July 1718, AC, C11B, 40:489.

33. Council to Bégon, 3 April 1719, AC, C11B, 41:547v.

34. Bégon to Council, 22 October 1719, AC, C11A, 41:155.

35. Bégon to Maurepas, 14 October 1723, AC, C11A, 45.

36. Bégon to Maurepas, 4 October 1723, AC, C11A, 45:248. ALso D. Standen, "Lanouiller de Boisclerc, Nicolas," D.C.B., vol. III, 352-354. Standen points out, "As early as 1731, Maurepas had agreed with Bégon, Dupuy, and Hocquart that Lanouiller had not been guilty of bad faith."

37. Bégon to Scipion-Jérôme, 30 October 1718, Fonds Bégon, P54/2K,21. And Bégon to Maurepas, 2 November 1724, AC, C11A, 46:257.

38. Dubé, Dupuy, 207. Dupuy made a scrutiny of the accounts from 1711 to 1723 to find that important documents were missing.

39. Julien, 202. From 1715 to 1760, he says, the state furnished Canada with 156 million francs.

40. Bégon to Council, 16 October 1717, AC, F1A, vol. 20.

41. Ibid. Funds for military fortifications were not a line item in this budget, but they appeared in the Council's report of funds granted by ordinance in 1718 to the amount of 30,000 livres. Thus, monies directed to the military establishment far exceeded 50% of royal spending for the colony and constituted a considerable source of revenue. See Eccles, France, 126 and "Military Establishment," 115. Eccles suggests that the military ran a close second to the fur trade as the economic base of New France - from 1675 to 1760 the military accounted for 72% of the fur trade revenue in the same period. Note: as uniforms were supplied 18d per day was deducted for each sergeant, corporal, anpessade, and soldier from the budget funds - to the sum of 22,680 for 28 companies. Salaries per month - Captain, 90 livres, Lieutenant, 60 livres, Ensign, 30 livres,

Sergeant, 22 livres, 10 sols, Corporal, 15 livres, anpessade, 12 livres, and soldier, 9 livres.

42. Bégon to Council, AC, F1A, vol. 20. Bégon budgeted 24,780 livres for these entries but of the total 20,000 livres was marked for Iroquois and related services.

43. Ibid. In addition, the chief colonial officials were provided with housing, the governor - the Château St. Louis and the intendant - the Intendant's Palace as well as houses in Montreal and transportation in the colony.

44. Ibid. Some other annual salaries were as follows: commander of the artillery at Quebec, 900 livres, engineer, 800 livres, the Jesuit father running the School of Hydrographie at Quebec, 800 livres, Sarrazin, king's surgeon, 300 livres, and the armourer, 360 livres.

45. Ibid., Wages of writers in the intendant's office, 600 livres, Commis of the Controller, 600 livres, boat watchman, 300 livres, baker, 540 livres, interpreters-Iroquois, 400 livres, Ottawa, 200 livres, Abénakis, 300 livres, and finally the Montreal woman who did the housework and laundry of the Chapel and alms house, 120 livres.

46. Ibid. It would appear that widows' pensions were continued if they remarried, i.e., "A la dame Deschambault cy devant veuve de Sr. de la Nouguère . . . 150 livres." Presents for the Indians included 24 medals of silver at 161 livres 10 sols each, 12 "grandes" medals of silver at 45 livres 15 sols each, and 30 medals of bronze made especially with a chain of the same metal.

47. Ibid.

Notes to Chapter Three

1. Bégon to Scipion-Jérôme, 8 October 1721, Fonds Bégon, P54/2K,27.

2. Eccles, France, 114. The cards were marked in denominations of 100, 50, 40, 20, 12, 9. 6, 4, and 2 livres; and 15 and 10 sols.

3. Ruette d'Auteuil to Regent, 9 December 1715, Shortt, Documents, 327. For a discussion of the problem of currency shortages common to the English colonies as in New France, see Harvey, "Stagnation économique . . ." and Nettels, The Money Supply of the American Colonies. For further study of the comparative economic organization of New France and New York, see Denis Delage, "Les structures économiques de la Nouvelle-France et de la Nouvelle-York," l'Actualité économique, 46 (avril-juin 1970), 67-118. See also, Frégault, "Essai," 289-363.

4. Pontchartrain to Vaudreuil and Bégon, 26 June 1712, Shortt, Documents, 219.

5. Vaudreuil and Bégon to Pontchartrain, 12 November 1712, R.A.P.Q. (1947-1948), 173. They reported that the agent of the Treasurer General "ayant trouvé peu de gens qui ait voulu prendre des lettres de change." Therefore, they said that it would have been "fort dangereux" to compel those holding cards to convert them to bills of exchange drawn on the city of Paris. . . ". . . les lettres de changes sont forts decriées."

6. Bégon to Pontchartrain, 12 November 1712, AC, C11A, 33:129-175. Bégon suggested that merchants sending 25,000 livres worth of goods from France could make 100,000 livres in the colony by selling to local merchants all the merchandise they had ". . . ainsi par cette misère les fonds ordonnés par sa Majesté se trouvent diminuer des trois quatres."

7. Pontchartrain to Vaudreuil and Bégon, 25 June 1713, AC, C11B, 35:248, 288 and Pontchartrain to Vaudreuil and Bégon, 28 June 1713.

8. Vaudreuil and Bégon to Pontchartrain, 19 November 1712, AC, C11A, 34:22. Bégon arrested an Irishman and an Englishman for counterfeiting, but he argued in their favour saying that they had made poor copies.

9. Ibid., Bégon to Pontchartrain, 12 November 1713, and d'Aigremont to Pontchartrain, 15 November 1713.

10. Ibid., 34-35. Vaudreuil to Pontchartrain, 11 February 1713.

11. Ibid., 34. d'Aigremont to Minister, 15 November 1713. As Controller he reported that all the papers left to him by Raudot re: card money were burnt in the Palace fire including the procès verbaux of the cards issued and burned from 1702 to 1711.

12. Nicolas-Gaspard Boucault, "Etat présent du Canada-1754," R.A.P.Q. (1920-1921), 1-50. Boucault related some of the details of the fire including the fact that M. Seuras died from an amputation operation which he chose against the advice of the colonials who advocated soaking his frozen leg in ice water.

13. unsigned to Vaudreuil and Bégon, 23 May 1713, Shortt, Documents, 267-271.

14. Ibid.

15. Ibid

16. Bégon to Scipion-Jérôme, 8 October 1721, Fonds Bégon, P54/2K, 27. See note 37.

17. Shortt, Documents, 207 ft. Pierre Nicolas Gaudion was Treasurer General of the Marine in the final years of the reign of Louis XIV

and into the years of the Regency.

18. Ibid., 267-71. unsigned to Vaudreuil and Bégon, 23 May 1714.

19. AC, C11A, 34:247v, 20 November 1714. Claude de Ramezay (1659-1724), governor of Trois-Rivières, Montreal and acting governor of New France 1714-1716. During his period in New France, he established a number of sawmills in which Bégon had a business interest. See Raymonde Litalien, "Jean-Baptiste-Nicolas Roch de Ramezay et sa famille au Canada et en France après 1760," R.H.A.F., 37: 04 (mars 1984), 603, 610.

20. Vaudreuil to Pontchartrain, 16 September 1714, Shortt, Documents, 273-285, and Vaudreuil and Bégon to Pontchartrain, 16 September 1714, Bégon to Pontchartrain, 1 November 1714, de Monseignat to Pontchartrain, 8 November 1714, and Bégon to Pontchartrain, 12 November 1714.

21. Vaudreuil to Pontchartrain, 16 September 1714, Shortt, Documents, 273-285.

22. Ibid., 321-25, Bégon to Pontchartrain, 7 November 1714.

23. Ibid.

24. Ibid., 191 ft., 289, Pontchartrain to de Nointel, 9 January 1715. Louis Bechameil, Marquis de Nointel (d. 1718) was Councillor of State in the council of the Commissioners of Commerce for the Marine 1708-1718. He was a brother-in-law to Nicolas Desmarets. Shortt says, "His official and personal influence with [Desmarets] were occasionally sought to obtain from the treasurer sufficient funds to meet the bills drawn on Canada." ft. 191.

25. Ibid., 287, 289, Pontchartrain to de Nointel, 9 February 1715.

26. Ibid., 303, Pontchartrain to Desmarets, 17 July 1715.

27. Ibid., 299-303, Pontchartrain to Bégon, 10 July 1715.

28. Ibid., 209 ft., 299-303. Shortt suggests that Gaudion was actually beseiged at his home by those taking legal action against him for non-payment. See also note unsigned but likely from Pontchartrain to Bégon, 10 July 1715 and AC, F3, Moreau St Mery, vol. 9, 322. Mémoire from Pontchartrain to Ramezay in July 1715. The minister insisted that the councillors of the Conseil Supérieur be present when Bégon burned the card money to confirm the number of cards burnt.

29. Ibid.

30. Ibid., 315, 317, Bégon to Council, 7 November 1715.

31. Ibid.

32. Ibid.

33. Ibid.

34. Ibid., 339, 341. Mémoire of Vaudreuil on the colony, February 1716. Also see Zoltvany, "Frontier Policy" 233 and Vaudreuil, 146 where Zoltvany suggests that it was a "considerable stroke of luck" for Vaudreuil to have been in France when Pontchartrain was dismissed. As Toulouse knew little about Canada, Vaudreuil was able to explain the geography, Indian tribes, and the importance of Indian relations.

35. Cobban, 23. And Shortt, Documents, 411 ft. John Law (1671-1729) was born in Edinburgh. He studied banking and finance under the tutelage of his father a banker and a goldsmith. Shortt says that Law's writing on the subject of finance showed that he understood the principles "in practically their most advanced forms." When his ideas didn't find acceptance in Britain, he turned to France. Most of the leading financial and commercial men in Paris (13) were to give their assent to his plan for a reorganization of the French system. The Regent, although in favour of Law's ideas, feared adverse public opinion. However, the bank was so successful, his fears were allayed. The bank found recognition in the use of its notes to discount the commercial paper of the merchant (this system had been in use in England for some time). From the success of the bank, Law turned to commerce and the development of a plan of finance, the "system."
Principles of the bank: All revenue (coin) from the king, i.e. the Receiver General, Farmers General was received by the bank which issued notes of 10,000 and 1,000 écus; these were deposited instead of coin at the Royal Treasury in return for receipts; the Royal Treasury then made usual payments in these notes: recipients of the notes then redeemed them at the bank for coin (Law argued that when the notes were of equal value to the coin, they would be used in preference, for convenience): under the system notes were never to exceed coin received in revenue, but a proportion could be used for other purposes when it was discovered how much remained at the bank.

36. Marion, 89. Marion says, "Le véritable auteur de cette suprenant résurrection d'un état qui semble perdu, c'était ce hardi financier écossais qui le régent avait accueilli, alors que Noailles [of the Council of Finance] et le Conseil ne comprenaient que les vieux expédients."

37. unsigned to Bégon, 16 June 1716, Shortt, Documents, 353, and AC, C11A, 36:26, 14 October 1716. Vaudreuil and Bégon set the Louis d'Or at 20 livres and the silver écu at 5 livres according to the Council's directive of October 1715. In 1726, they were adjusted to the Louis d'Or at 24 livres and the écu at 6 livres where they remained to the Revolution.

38. Shortt, Documents, 375. Refusal of the Council to allow a variation in the rate at which cards were taken. 9 March 1717 the Council

deliberated on Bégon's appeal for compensation for his losses in the fire and on his salary (to the amount of 47,000 livres). Bégon claimed that no other intendant could be in the same position. The Council's response to Bégon's letter was a note pencilled in the margin asking Raudot (Antoine-Denis?) former intendant to investigate. See Ft. 15 and Bégon to Scipion-Jérôme, 8 October 1721, Fonds Bégon, P54/2K, 27. Bégon wrote, "The only embarrassment I have in this affair (card money) is that those who gave in their card money were obliged to pay double. I, too, must pay up to 37,000 livres to the Domaine d'Occident (taxes on wine and provisions brought into Quebec?) And Bégon to Council, 1715. He asked if his debts could be paid in "money of France" due to his loss of 40,000 livres in 1713. The reply from the Council was ". . . le Conseil me fit response qu'il ne pouvait entrer dans les pertes passées." And Bégon to Scipion-Jérôme, no date, Fonds Bégon, P54/2K, 6. He wrote that he had spent out his assets in card money. He had more than 1000 livres of furniture but couldn't sell it, so he believed that he had no alternative but to liquidate as he owed the king 37,500 livres on loans and said he couldn't bring himself to ask the Council to discharge his debts as he had already been turned down twice. See also Fonds Bégon, P54/2K, 23, 13 October 1719. As the eldest son, Bégon negotiated the sale of the family home in Blois, despite protest from Scipion-Jérôme and Claude-Michel. Several parts of his father's collection including much of the library were sold in order to help settle his debts. Negotiations concerning the sale of his father's estate continued into the thirties.

39. Council on Card Money, 12 April 1717, Shortt, Documents, 337-393.

40. Ibid., 373, 377-393. Council to colony, 8 March 1717, 12 April 1717 and the King's Memorandum to Vaudreuil and Bégon, 5 July 1717.

41. Vaudreuil and Bégon to Council, 24 October 1718, AC, C11A, 39:14, 15. They explained that they had been pressed by the circumstances to make the new issue. Bégon said that he would try all practical means to settle the indispensible expenses. Also see AC, C11A, 39:189 the de Monseignat mémoire July 1718 and Shortt, Documents, 393-443, Crown regulations concerning the card money.

42. Shortt, Documents, 339, 403. Declaration of the abolishment of card money, signed de Monseignat. On 2 March 1729 the French government authorized 400,000 livres of card money to be released. It remained in circulation to the Conquest. Also see Giraud, 93.

43. Cobban, 27. See also J. Bosher, The Single Duty Project (London, 1964), 38. Bosher says that Law tried to stimulate French trade in a way unknown since Colbert.

44. Cobban, 38. And see Chapter 1, ft. 31 and Frégault, "Essai," 319.

45. Cobban, 25. Marion, 105. Marion argues that Law deserves praise for his fiscal reforms, a general suppression of duties, i.e., the abolition of territorial duties and his advocacy of the freedom of

commerce and industry.

46. Cobban, 26.

47. Zoltvany, Vaudreuil, 174. Zoltvany says that New France prospered from 1719 to 1724 as never before. The population increased, more arpents of land were under cultivation and a greater yield was had from wheat and flax. The number of sawmills increased from 19 to 44.

48. Shortt, Documents, 483 ft. Felix Le Pelletier de la Houssaie was of noble birth, Intendant of Finance and a Councillor of State. He was appointed Controller General in 1720. He "succeeded to a remarkable degree," Shortt says, "in restoring financial order." Le Pelletier resigned in 1722 and died in 1723. See Filion, Maurepas, vis à vis, 12. Of Maurepas, Filion says, "Il tient en main les leviers de commande d'une efficace et énergique." With suppression of the Councils in 1723, Maurepas was appointed Minister of Marine.

49. AC, C11A, 42:30, 26 September 1720 and AC, C11A, 44: 215, 216, 301. Statement of all the card money from 1702 to 1717--"money of country" 4,473,485 l 10 sols--"money of France" 3,355,114 l 2 sols. See chapter 2, ft. 38.

50. Bégon to Scipion-Jérôme, 8 October 1721, Fonds Bégon, P54/2K, 27.

51. Bégon to Maurepas, 2 September 1724, AC, C11A, 46:258. To allegations that Lanouiller may have used the caisse to his own advantage, Bégon said, ". . . je peux vous assurer, Monseigneur, par avance du contraire." And AC, C11A, 47: 118v, 31 October 1725. Also see chapter 2, ft. 36 for Dale Standen's remarks on the relationship between Bégon, Maurepas, and Lanouiller. And Bégon mémoire, AC, C11A, 44:383, 26 October 1722.

52. Ibid.

53. Ibid.

Notes to Chapter Four

1. Bégon to Pontchartrain, 12 November 1712, AC, C11A, 34:311.

2. Bégon and Ramezay to Council, 7 November 1715, AC, C11A, 35:30.

3. Eccles, France, 27, 119. Under Cardinal Richelieu the first company was formed (the Company of 100 Associates) in 1627 to "develop and exploit the resources of New France and to establish self-sufficient agricultural settlements, and to foster missionary activity." See also E. E. Rich, Hudson's Bay Company, 14. Rich discusses the early beginnings of the fur trade and the success and failure of a number of chartered companies before the Crown took over the trade

in 1663. Also, M. Trudel, The Beginnings of New France 1524-1663 (Toronto, 1973).

4. Eccles, France, 84. The lease for tax collection cost the Domaine 350,000 livres per year. The Domaine, in turn, sub-leased the beaver trade to Charles Aubert de la Chesnaye (1630-1702) for 119,000 livres per year.

5. Shortt, Documents, 193 t. Louis François Aubert (d. 1712) was a French merchant established in Amsterdam, with financial and trading interests in France; Jean-Baptiste Néret was, according to Shortt, a "bourgeois" Parisian merchant; and Jean-Baptiste-Joseph Gayot, Councillor of the king, had been associated with the Compagnie de la colonie. From 1715 to 1717, Néret and Gayot had financial difficulty in holding the lease of the Canadian trade.

6. Shortt, Documents, 407, 411 ft. The Compagnie d'Occident was given a twenty-five year lease of trade in Louisiana and subsequently the Illinois coutnry along the Mississippi. When the trade collapsed, the company was referred to as the "Mississippi Bubble." The fall of Law's system, Shortt says, meant that the company lost its connections with "high finance" and returned to a rather "hum-drum" existence.

7. Eccles, Frontier, 146, 148. The post commanders, Eccles says, had the responsibility of "policing the west," keeping peace with the Indian tribes and regulating the voyageurs. For emphasis on the importance of the Indian in the fur trade see A. J. Ray and D. Freeman, "Give us Good Measure": An Economic Analysis of Relations Between the Indians and Hudson's Bay Company Before 1763 (Toronto, 1970), and A. J. Ray, Indians in the Fur Trade (Toronto, 1974), C. E. Heidenreich and A. J. Ray, The Early Fur Trade (Toronto, 1976). The Indian tribes most involved in the French fur trade during Bégon's intendancy were the Abénakis, Ottawa, and Iroquois. The Ottawa worked as middlemen for the Cree and Assiniboine bringing their furs down to Michilimakinac from the western regions.

8. Antoine Champagne, Petite Histoire du Voyageur (St. Boniface, 1971), 12-18.

9. Adair, "Anglo-French," 135. Adair says that from 1718 to 1727 44.8% of the fur received at La Rochelle was fur other than beaver.

10. Ruette d'Auteuil, "Mémoire of 1715," R.A.P.Q. (1922-1923), 71. See also, d'Allaire, les Ruettes d'Auteuil. Also H. A. Innis, The Fur Trade in Canada (Toronto, 1956) and E. E. Rich, Hudson's Bay Company, The Fur Trade and the Northwest to 1857 (Toronto, 1967).

11. Eccles, France, 126. From this revenue the cost of trade goods; salaries, wages, and commissions; storage, insurance, and freight were deducted. Of the trade revenue, he argues, 72% went to France, 14% to Canadian merchants and traders, 9% spread through the colony and 5% went to the Crown. He says that about 200,000 livres per year remained in the colony and of that 140,000 livres

was divided among a few families. See also, W. J. Eccles, "A Belated Review of Harold Innis, The Fur Trade in Canada," C.H.R. (1979), 436.

12. Vaudreuil and Bégon to Pontchartrain, 19 November 1713, AC, C11A, 34:11v-12.

13. Ibid., 16, 127. And Bégon mémoire, 20 September 1713. The Fox Indians worked as middlemen bringing furs down from the west. However, French expansion into the west threatened their monopoly of this aspect of the trade. By 1712, the Fox were in conflict with the French. See Appendix 6.

14. For information on provision of the fur trade see V. C. Fowke, Canadian Agricultural Policy. The Historical Pattern (Toronto, 1947), W. L. Morton, Manitoba, A History (Toronto, 1957).

15. Mémoire, on Detroit, Bégon Mémoire, 1 October 1714, AC, C11A, 34:312, 325.

16. Ramezay and Bégon to Council, 7 November 1716, AC, C11A, 36:222.

17. Vaudreuil and Bégon to Council, 12 November 1716, St. Boniface Historical Society Archives, Carton 5, no. 287.

18. Ibid., and Council to Vaudreuil and Bégon, December 1717, AC, C11A, 37:376.

19. January 1721, AC, C11A, 43:16 and Longueuil and Bégon to Maurepas, AC, C11A, 47:126, 238, and Bégon to Maurepas, 10 June 1725. Bégon pointed out that since the establishment of the colony, there had been an unwritten agreement that the western regions were under French authority, but that now they were considered "neutre" because there weren't any "large" French forts or posts to claim French authority. Eccles, France, 120. Forts Frontenac, Niagara, and Detroit were subsidized by the king and were kept as king's posts where goods were sold cheaper than at Michilimakinac where trade was open to all licensed traders. The posts which subsequently were developed further inland were leased to individual traders. See also Cyrille Gélinas, The Role of Fort Chambly in the Development of New France 1665-1760 (Ottawa, 1983). Another fort important to the Great Lakes "chain" was Fort Chambly, first established in 1679 on the Richelieu River south of Montreal. Under the direction of Chaussegros de Léry, and Bégon and with funding from the Crown, it was reconstructed, in stone, in 1720. And Charbonneau et al., 51. From 1717 to 1720, there was clear recognition on the part of the Council, influenced by John Law, for the need to fortify Quebec against a possible advance by the English.

20. Beauharnois and Dupuy to Maurepas, 12 October 1726, AC, C11A, 48:36. And Zoltvany, Vaudreuil, 176. Vaudreuil's role in the expansion of the western posts must not be forgotten, nevertheless, it is also important to stress Bégon's part in providing funds.

21. Vaudreuil and Bégon to Pontchartrain, 20 November 1712, AC, C11A, 33:17. The arguments appeared again in 1714. Vaudreuil and Bégon to Pontchartrain, 20 November 1714, AC, C11A, 34:231-234. And Zoltvany, Vaudreuil, 117. " . . . Canadians believed that the congés were one of the foundation stones of Indian diplomacy."

22. Vaudreuil and Bégon to Pontchartrain, 19 November 1713, AC, C11A, 34:13v.

23. Eccles, France, 119. Zoltvany, "Bégon," 61. In 1712, Aubert, Néret and Gayot refused to accept castor gras because of the backlog of fur in the storehouses.

24. Roy, Judgements et délibérations du Conseil Supérieur, 1710-1716, 1213. The congés were granted by the Council on 28 April 1715 and were registered in Canada 31 March 1716. See also AC, C11A, 123:153, and Roy, Inventaire des Ordonnances, 147. Amnesty would be granted to the inhabitants of New France going to trade with the Indians without congés if they agreed to check in at Michilimakinac, and were prepared to serve with the troops against the Fox. Also Council to Vaudreuil and Bégon, 5 July 1718, AC, C11B, 40:468. Appreciation was expressed to Vaudreuil and Bégon for their management of the congés, but it was pointed out that the Council recognized that the congés were not all going to poor families. See also Eccles, Frontier, 146. Those granted congés had to have notarized permits registering their names, addresses, place of destination, and numbers of canoes. And Adair, "Anglo-French," 141. The cost of a congé was 500 to 600 livres. This could be ample reason for the coureurs de bois to go up country without being licensed, and a reason for the colonial officials' interest in restoring them, as the funds received went to the recettes extraordinaires.

25. Bégon to Pontchartrain, 12 November 1714, AC, C11A, 34:311. Also Zoltvany, "Bégon," 23. Zoltvany suggests that Bégon's free trade ideas were "assez avancées pour son temps."

26. Bégon to Pontchartrain, 12 November 1714, AC, C11A, 34:311.

27. Schaeper, Thomas J. "The French Council of Commerce, 1700-1715. An Administrative Study of Mercantilism after Colbert," Dissertation Abstracts, 38 (1977-1978), 4996A. See also, D. Miquelon, "The French Council of Commerce: A Study of Mercantilism," by T. Schaeper. C.J.H., xix, no. 1 (April 1984), 107-108. Schaeper says that the French Council of Commerce played an advisory role in the decision making of the Marine. Although the Council was composed of a number of merchants who often supported "liberté du commerce," when it came to serious decisions they could be as mercantilist as Colbert. This may explain the receptive response to Bégon's ideas in the beginning, and also the late rejection of free trade for Canada.

28. Bégon mémoire, 1715, AC, C11A, 35:189. Also Vaudreuil and Bégon to Council 14 October 1716, AC, C11A, 36:8-25.

29. Council to Vaudreuil and Bégon, 1712-1718, AC, C11A, 123:256. See also Adair, "Anglo-French," 138.

30. Vaudreuil and Bégon to Council, 6 November 1720, AC, C11A, 42:137-145 and Adair, "Anglo-French," 138. Adair suggests that the government returned the monopoly to the company because of protest in favour of company control.

31. Vaudreuil to Toulouse, 10 November 1721, AC, C11A, 44:175.

32. Ibid., 175-194, Bégon to Council, 10 November 1721.

33. Ibid., 383-402v. Bégon mémoire on the subject of beaver. And E. Salone, La colonisation de la Nouvelle-France; étude sur les origines de la nation canadienne française (Paris, 1906), 393. Salone suggests that the most productive years of the fur trade were 1724 and 1725.

34. Bégon mémoire, 12 November 1712, AC, C11A, 33:132v. Bégon also emphasized the trade value of muskets, particularly those manufactured in Tulle, for the Indian trade and for arming the inhabitants as a means of colonial security.

35. Ibid., 307v. And Bégon to Pontchartrain, 25 September 1715, AC, C11A, 35:150.

36. Bégon mémoire, 12 November 1714, AC, C11A, 34:307, 308 and Bégon mémoire, 25 September 1715, AC, C11A, 35:150.

37. A. J. Lunn, "The illegal fur trade out of New France," C.H.A. Report, 20 (1939), 61-76. Lunn suggests that it is impossible to calculate the returns of the illegal trade, but some estimate it at 1/2 to 2/3 of the quantity of beaver brought into Canada each year. However, she points out that it likely did the company a service by preventing a glut of furs in the French storehouses.

38. Ibid., 63, 76. Other English trade goods valued by the French and the Indians were "silver coffee spoons, silver forks, table knives, pen knives, pipes, gold buttons, buckles, London-made boots, lace gloves. . . . Most valued was wampam (small white shells from Long Island).

39. Ibid., Eccles, Frontier, 137. Adair, "Anglo-French," 140, and Zoltvany, Vaudreuil, 76.

40. Lunn, 61-76.

41. Vaudreuil to Council, 14 October 1724, AC, C11A, 46:47.

42. Shortt, Documents, xlvii, and Jugements et délibérations, 1215 and Edits, Ordonnances, Royaux Déclarations, 401.

43. Bégon to Pontchartrain, 12 November 1712, AC, C11A, 33:27-29, and Vaudreuil and Bégon to Pontchartrain, 19 November 1713, AC, C11A, 34:10, 11, and Jugements et délibérations du conseil supérieur, vol. 6, 989.

44. Vaudreuil and Bégon to Pontchartrain, 19 November 1713, AC, C11A, 34:10-11.

45. Ramezay and Bégon to Toulouse, 7 November 1715, AC, C11A, 35:31v.

46. Ibid., 187-189, Bégon mémoire on fabric, 3 November 1715.

47. Bégon mémoire, 9 October 1716, AC, C11A, 36:151-152.

48. Vaudreuil and Bégon to Council, 8 August 1718, AC, C11A, 44:13.

49. Ibid., 297-298, Vaudreuil and Bégon to Council, 17 October 1722.

50. Bégon mémoire, 14 October 1723, AC, C11A, 45:35v.

Notes to Chapter Five

1. Bégon to Pontchartrain, 12 November 1712, AC, C11A, 33:142.

2. Pontchartrain to Bégon, 23 July 1715, AC, C11B, 37:204v.

3. Bégon to Pontchartrain, 12 November 1714, AC, C11A, 34:309v-310. Also see Denis Delage, "Les structures économiques," 114. Delage argues that the key to colonial success was diversification of colonial industry. Mercantilism, shortage of money, and labour were problems common to both the English and the French colonies, he says, but the English colonies more quickly diversified and achieved more rapid growth. Bégon understood this fact in 1714. Note: the quotation has been punctuated by the author as the original was marked only by semi-colons.

4. Bégon to Pontchartrain, 12 November 1714, AC, C11A, 34:309v-310. Bégon also remarked that at the seminary they made black fabric for the priests and blue fabric for the "pensionnaires." He stressed, ". . . la nécessité leur a fait prendre ce party."

5. Ibid., The iron forges on the St. Maurice near Trois-Rivières developed in the 1730's. See C. Nish, François-Etienne Cugnet: entrepreneur et entreprises en Nouvelle-France (Montreal, 1975) and Eccles, France, 123. Shipbuilding came into its own in the same years under the guidance of Intendant Gilles Hocquart.

6. Pontchartrain to Bégon, 23 July 1715, AC, C11B, 37:204v and Council of Marine to Ramezay and Bégon, 16 June 1716, AC, C11A, 121:64-74.

7. Eccles, France, 122. Normal bread consumption in New France in the eighteenth century was a two livre loaf per person per day.

8. Roy, Inventaire des Ordonnances, vol. 1, 133-250. From 1712 to 1726, Bégon issued over 724 ordinances, of these a number related to control of the wheat trade, with particular reference to export, to weights and measures, prices, internal distribution, and transportation within the colony.

9. A. Reid, "Intercolonial Trade During the French Regime," C.H.R., xxxii, 3 (Sept. 1951), 245. Reid notes from 1707 to 1740 the variety of trade goods increased in the trade with the West-Indies: flour, lumber, salt, meat, dried and salt cod, salmon, biscuit, butter, fish oil, and vegetables. The return trade was sugar, molasses, and syrup. By 1730, she says, evidence that the export trade had increased could be seen on the streets of Quebec. Merchants from the Antilles joined those of the colony to peddle their goods in the shops of the town. And, D. J. Horton, "Raudot," 554. The groundwork for an export trade to Île Royale ahd been laid by A. D. Raudot: "His plan to establish Cape Breton as a market for Canadian produce and as a commercial entrepôt for France's Atlantic empire was truly a master stroke."

10. Bégon regulation, 24 January 1714, AC, C11A, 34:326.

11. "Lettres de Claude de La Martinière, B.R.H., xxxviii (1932), 18-39. And, Jugements et délibérations, vol. 6, 794, 16 June 1714. La Martinière's accusation of Bégon was presented to the Conseil Supérieur while Bégon was away in Montreal. Therefore, he was not immediately present to answer to the charges. See also Shortt, Documents, 265 ft. and E. H. Borins, "Bermen de la Martinière, Claude de," D.C.B., vol. 11, 56-57. La Martinière (1636-1719) was first appointed to the Conseil Souverain in 1678 where he soon showed his "aggressive temperament." In April 1714, he was appointed sub-delegate of Bégon and it was from this position that he launched the charges against the intendant which were in direct contravention to his authority. Shortt claims that La Martinière also was reputed to have had quarrels with Raudot and Vaudreuil.

12. Zoltvany, "Bégon," 63.

13. Bégon to Pontchartrain, 12 November 1714, AC, C11A, 34:305.

14. A. Reid, "The Development and Importance of Quebec, 1603-1760," (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, McGill, 1950), 238. The "boulangerie du roi was located near the Palace of the Intendant and was used for baking biscuit (the bread product used on long voyages) for the West Indies, and bread for the colony in times of famine. Reid suggests that there was no evidence of abuse in the government project until the Bigot regime.

15. Bégon to Pontchartrain, 12 November 1714, AC, C11A, 34:306.

16. Ibid.

17. Ibid., Roy, Jugements et délibérations, vol. 6, 794, 16 June 1714

18. See Chapter 3, p. 63.

19. Zoltvany, "Bégon," 63. Bégon was later accused by Pontchartrain of sending flour to the Antilles on ships owned by Jean Butler, La Rochelle merchant. The evidence on Bégon's connections with Butler is not conclusive. But it is known that Butler carried merchandise

for Bégon to the colony on a number of occasions between 1713 and 1722, and that Bégon, because of his losses in the fire of 1713 and losses on the card money, was seriously in debt to the merchant. See Fonds Bégon, 1717-1721, P54/1K,11 and 29 October 1721, P54/2K, 29. Evidence relevant to the profits made and the amount of grain shipped was not found by the author, however, bills of lading, if traceable might be helpful.

20. Ibid., 64.

21. Pontchartrain to Bégon, 23 July 1715, AC, C11B, 37:204v. At the height of the card money crisis, see Chapter 3, Pontchartrain issued a reprimand to Bégon saying that he had received innumerable complaints about the intendant's management of commercial affairs. The substance of his attack, which concerns the export of wheat and the slaughter of animals in Quebec, comes from La Martinière's charges of 1714. Bégon was told to justify his conduct and to restore order or he would be recalled. However, nothing further was done, nor were the charges raised again. Pontchartrain's fall from office in the autumn of 1715 may well have been responsible for closing the matter.

22. Ramezay and Bégon to Council, 7 November 1715, AC, C11A, 35:44v. And, Bégon to Council, 25 September 1715, AC, C11A, 35:133-139.

23. Bégon to Council, 7 November 1715, AC, C11A, 35:141 and Council report on Canada, 3 April 1716, AC, C11A, 123.

24. Council to Ramezay and Bégon, 16 June 1716, AC, C11A, 121:64-71 and Lunn, "Economic development," 71. The Council in its determination to generate commerce in the colony, she says, sent a list of goods and prices which the colony could produce, in 1717. Vaudreuil and Bégon replied that it was impossible to fix prices with the instability of finance and withdrawal of the card money. The plan failed, Lunn says, because of the lack of understanding from the Home government. And, D. Miquelon, Dugard of Rouen (Montreal, 1978). Miquelon notes that following 1713 the French government was particularly interested in re-generating the Atlantic trade which is evident in the letters patent of 1717 and 1727 establishing policy for regulation of the trade.

25. Vaudreuil to Council, 3 November 1717, AC, C11A, 38:157-159. And, Zoltvany, Vaudreuil, 150. Zoltvany suggests that the governor had taken advantage of his stay in France to complain about his relations with Bégon and how Bégon had been "cramping his activity" (re: the opening of Michilimakinac) see Chapter 4). Also, "Bégon," 64. Zoltvany says that had Vaudreuil acted on the Council's decision to give him power over the intendant, that in economic matters, it would have been a "flagrant intrusion" into the intendant's authority, thus, Vaudreuil refrained from such action. However, Zoltvany also contends that Bégon under the Council's edict "fell into lethargy." But evidence from the correspondence would suggest the contrary, if one looks at Bégon's record, from 1717 to 1726, in economic management, i.e., resolution of the card money affair; completion

of several public works projects--the Intendant's Palace, the Fort at Niagara . . . trade relations with the Indians and English colonies (his mémoirs on the fabric trade), and commercial development as illustrated in this chapter are examples of his continued involvement in the life of the colony. See also D. J. Horton, "Antoine-Denis Raudot," D.C.B., 553. It is interesting that Raudot complained to Pontchartrain that Vaudreuil was interfering in his efforts to improve domestic economic conditions. Also see Horton, "Hocquart," 364. Horton presents another insight into administrative relations, when he suggests that as Hocquart's economic ideas gained more favour in the Marine financial patronage for the intendant was increased, therefore, causing "jealousy and frustration" in Governor Beauharnois. This is a possible explanation for Vaudreuil's attacks on Bégon in 1717 over the export of wheat.

26. Council to Vaudreuil and Bégon, 6 July 1718, AC, C11B, 40:486v.

27. Vaudreuil and Bégon to Council, 26 October 1719, AC, C11A, 40:86.

28. Council to Vaudreuil and Bégon, 6 July 1718, AC, C11B, 40:512. And, Council to Vaudreuil and Bégon, AC, C11A, 41.

29. See V. C. Fowke, Canadian Agricultural Policy and Lunn, "Economic development," 96. Lunn says that in 1724 trade in peas was "brisk."

30. Bégon to Pontchartrain, 1714, AC, C11A, 34:310; Council report on Bégon, 16 June 1720, AC, C11A, 41:51; Council report to Bégon, sans date. AC, C11A, 43:77v; Council to Vaudreuil and Bégon, 13 January 1721, AC, C11A, 43:84.

31. Bégon to Maurepas, 2 November 1724, AC, C11A, 46:253. See E. Salone, La Colonisation de la Nouvelle-France, 378-379. Salone registers the increase in the production of hemp. In 1723--1,644 livres were sold; in 1724--5,795 livres. There was also an increase in the production of linen in 1719--45,970 livres sold and in 1720--54,650 livres. Lunn, "Economic development," 76. Lunn says that hemp was selling at 22 livres to 24 livres at the time of Bégon's price increase. Also see Horton, "Hocquart," 361. Horton points out that in 1741 Hocquart decided to offer "unprofitably high prices" for hemp as an incentive to growers and merchants.

32. Dubé, Dupuy, 97. See also Boucault, "Etat présent du Canada," 22. Boucault said that hemp "vient fort beau au Canada," but there had been little grown since Bégon's departure and the subsequent decrease in price. Also Bégon to Maurepas, 14 October 1723, C11A, 45:32v. Related to Bégon's efforts to increase agricultural production was his work on a census (completed 1725) which registered all titles of property, the numbers of seigneuries, their dimensions and whether they were being fully cultivated, buildings and mills. . . . Registration of the lands under cultivation was particularly important for Bégon's work in agricultural development, and the census was also important for the work of those who followed.

33. Bégon to Pontchartrain, 1712, AC, C11A, 33:170. Maurepas to Bégon and Longueuil and Bégon, 8 January 1726, AC, C11B, 49:618v. Maurepas noted in the census sent by Bégon in 1725 that there were 5917 horses in the colony, more than necessary for all the inhabitants. Bégon had argued that inhabitants with less exercise (if they were to use their cabrioles and carriages) would be "moins forts" and "moins vigoreux" which would be serious, if they were to be called up to war. The Marine ordered the reduction of horses, in response to Bégon's mémoire.

34. Reid, "Quebec," 243.

35. For information on the cod fisheries see Charles de la Morandière, Histoire de la pêche française de la morue dans l'Amérique septentrionale (Paris, 1962), 2 vols, and H. A. Innis, The Cod Fisheries: The History of an International Economy (Toronto, 1940, rev. Toronto, 1954), Selected Documents in Canadian Economic History (Toronto, 1929), 74-75.

36. Jean-François Brière, "Pêche et politique à Terre-Neuve au XVIII^e siècle: la France véritable gagnante du traité d'Utrecht?", C.H.R., lxiv, 2 (juin 1983), 168-187.

37. Bégon to Pontchartrain, 12 November 1712, AC, C11A, 33:135. Bégon was committed to develop all the inland fisheries which included the fishing for eels, carp, sturgeon, salmon. . . .

38. Alain Laberge, "Etat, entrepreneurs, habitants et monopole: le "privilege" de la pêche au marsouin dans le Bas Saint-Laurent 1700-1730," R.H.A.F., 37, no. 4 (mars 1984), 544.

39. Roy, Inventaire des Ordonnances, vol. 1, 194, 27 January 1721. And mémoire on the fisheries, 4 November 1721, AC, C11A, 44:91-96. Bégon projected the establishment of 21 fisheries in two years from 1721.

40. Roy, Arrêts et réglements, vol. 2, 297-302, 5 July 1722. Note: members of the habitant group were the brothers Hazeur de l'Orme, Michel Sarrazin and Sr. Gatin.

41. Laberge, 554.

42. Ibid., and Dubé, Dupuy, 170. It is interesting to note that Dupuy argued in 1726 for an expansion of the porpoise fisheries, but he was turned down by the Marine. However, this does raise the question as to whether the area was really overfished as was suggested by Laberge. Also see Horton, "Hocquart," 360. Horton says that the sedentary fisheries along the St. Lawrence and Labrador coasts became profitable in the 1730's.

43. Bégon to Pontchartrain, 12 November 1714, AC, C11A, 34:304v and Vaudreuil and Bégon to Council, 14 October 1716, AC, C11A, 36:30. In 1713, Bégon bought planks, boards, and wood for masts from the Ramezay sawmills with the intention of developing the forestry

industry. However, the king's ship didn't arrive to collect the cargo either in 1713 or in 1714, therefore, he used some of the wood in the colony and he shipped some of it to Île Royale. Bégon mémoire, 14 October 1723, AC, C11A, 45:199v. Bégon reported that he could get the best market price on wood from the Ramezay sawmills. And, 2 November 1724, AC, C11A, 46:154--statement of tar, hemp, and wood sent to France by Mme. Ramezay. Report from Rochefort, 16 October 1721, F2C. Carton 3, p. 3. The Council reported that "le Chameau" had brought boards of maple from Canada to be used for making furniture. See also Litalien, "Ramezay," and the biographical note in Chapter 3 for Claude de Ramezay and Chapter 1 for a note on Francois Beauharnois. And Bégon to Council, 14 October 1716, AC, C11A, 36:38. Bégon insisted that Ramezay who had commanded this country "so well" would like to have an advancement for his son. The patronage appointment was later granted by the Marine.

44. Bégon to Pontchartrain, 12 November 1714, AC, C11A, 34:304v.

45. Ibid., 30v. Also Vaudreuil and Bégon to Council, 20 October 1717. AC, C11A, 38:36. Bégon reported that he hoped to increase the number of tar furnaces so that production in 1718 would rise to 200 barrels per year. Tar produced by dry distillation of wood was used particularly as a preservative of timber and iron, therefore, it was important to the shipbuilding industry. And Council to Vaudreuil and Bégon, 13 January 1721, AC, C11A, 43:84. The tar industry was generated by higher prices offered to the producers by the Council. For a contemporary account of the tar furnaces see Boucault, "Etat présent du Canada," 21. Boucault says that in Bégon's time there was "une gouldonnerie royalle qu'il avait établie dans la coste de ce Beaupré, au lieu nommé la Baye Saint Paul qui produisait beaucoup, et à l'imitation [sic] de cette entreprise, plusieurs habitants au Nord qu'au Sud du fleuve s'étaient ordonnés à ce travail. . . ." However, he said that after Bégon's departure the tar works were neglected.

46. Vaudreuil and Bégon to Council, 20 October 1719, AC, C11A, 38:35.

47. Bégon and Tilly (mast-maker) report, 12 July 1725, AC, C11A, 47:311.

48. Ibid.

49. Lunn, "Economic development," 15. Lunn says that the major source of labour in the colony was supplied by the troops of the marine. See also Charbonneau et al, Québec: The Fortified City, 243-257.

50. Eccles, France, 76. See Arrêts et réglements, vol. 2, 437, 445-446, corvée by their contract of concession of land. But it was possible for the habitants to exempt themselves by paying 40 sols for each day missed. And, 22 January 1716, habitants were encouraged to give freely of corvée time as seigneurs could withhold food and tools (except during sowing and harvest). For a fuller description of feudal practices in New France see M. Trudel, Le Régime Seigneurial (Ottawa, 1956), W. B. Munro, The Seigneurs of Old Canada (Toronto, 1915) and R. Colebrook-Harris, The Seigneurial System in early Canada: a Geographical Study (Madison,

1966). See also Lunn, "Economic development," 3. Lunn points out that edicts were issued in 1714 and 1716 calling for engagés, farm labourers, domestics, millers, and coopers at wages of 20 livres to 150 livres per year. But the plan met with little success. In 1721, the Council decided to send prisoners for a five year term. However, although Vaudreuil accepted the faux-sauniers as legitimate labour, he agreed with Bégon's objection to the arrival of prisoners. The officials reported that since the prisoners had arrived there had been an increase in petty crime.

51. Bégon to Pontchartrain, 12 November 1714, AC, C11A, 34:310v and Bégon mémoire, AC, C11A, 123:197. See also H. Clare Pentland, Labour, and Capital in Canada 1650-1860 (Toronto, 1981). Pentland's book gives a brief and general discussion of labour in eighteenth century French Canada.

52. Documents Relatifs à la Nouvelle-France, 21-23.

53. Council Report re: Bégon mémoire on negro workers, 1717, AC, C11A, 37:3. And M. Trudel, l'Esclavage au Canada Français (Quebec, 1960), 26-36. Trudel says that Vaudreuil had owned at least two slaves who had physically fared well in Canada. He suggests that it is not known whether Bégon personally had slaves.

54. Council Report re: Bégon mémoire on negro workers, 1717, AC, C11A, 37:03, and Council to Vaudreuil and Bégon, 13 January 1721, AC, C11A, 43:82v and Trudel, l'Esclavage, 35. Trudel says that Bégon's proposal received a favourable response from the Council, but when it went before the Compagnie des Indes it was dropped because of company policies concerning the transportation of slaves.

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